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## THE ABBÉ PRÉVOST AND SHAKESPEARE<sup>1</sup>

In the seventeenth century the French in general were interested little in the literature or the civilization of England, but strangely enough it was Louis XIV himself who, quite unintentionally, contributed powerfully to change the indifferent attitude of his countrymen. In 1688 he revoked the Edict of Nantes. The annulling of that act of religious toleration brought into being forthwith a sturdy band of Protestant refugees eager enough to become the enthusiastic champions of that England which gave them shelter and welcome. They founded periodicals for which they wrote numerous articles in praise of England. Untiringly they translated, now short passages, now whole books, chosen from among the more or the less important literary works of Great Britain. More and more numerous became that part of the public which was well disposed toward their efforts. Still, for the movement to obtain complete success there was needed the influence of men of greater talents. Finally three men came to the fore, of whom each had particular motives for being glad to sing the praises of the country across the Channel, thereby taking now and again a backhanded fling at France herself. Of these men one was a Swiss Protestant, one a government exile, and the third a monk who had fled from his monastery.

The first, Béat de Muralt, is the author of certain *Lettres sur les Anglois et sur les François*, which, although written about 1694 or

<sup>1</sup> It is a pleasure here to express my obligation to one of my former professors at Johns Hopkins University, M. Elie Carcassonne, who, while this study was in preparation, aided me often with keen criticism and enlightening suggestion.

1695, did not appear until 1725. They were much read,<sup>1</sup> and they deserved popularity, but literature held a small place in the esteem of this grave Swiss, and he spoke of it only apologetically.

Voltaire was of very different stuff. In his *Discours sur la tragédie* of 1731,<sup>2</sup> in the French version of the *Essai sur la poésie épique* of 1733,<sup>3</sup> and in the *Lettres philosophiques* of 1734 he gave much space to literature and to English literature especially. Nevertheless even his admiration, keen enough sometimes, was often greatly limited either by professional jealousy or by prejudices due to birth and education.

A third author came to play his part in the movement of ideas from England to France, namely the Abbé Prévost, who about this same time conceived the idea of gaining his livelihood by spreading among the French public a taste for things English.<sup>4</sup> His success is a proof of the vigor of the movement inaugurated by the French Protestant refugees.<sup>5</sup> In 1731 appeared Volumes V–VII of the *Mémoires et avantures d'un homme de qualité*, which contains appreciations in general very favorable to English literature. Another novel, *Le Philosophe anglois ou Histoire de monsieur Cléveland*, began to appear during the same year. From 1733 to 1740 the Abbé published his weekly periodical, the *Pour et Contre*,<sup>6</sup> which was of sufficient importance for Voltaire to seek to obtain in it favorable reviews of his works.<sup>7</sup> All sorts of subjects of most unequal value lured the facile pen of the indefatigable Abbé, but his principal aim in this magazine was to publish criticism on English literature.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A second edition appeared as early as 1727 at Cologne. Muralt's *Lettres* influenced to some extent Voltaire and also the *Nouvelle Héloïse* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. For a treatment of the latter question see my article, "The Sources of Rousseau's *Edouard Bomston*," to appear in *Modern Philology*.

<sup>2</sup> Printed as the Preface to *Brutus*.

<sup>3</sup> Published with special intent to defend the *Henriade*.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Marais to President Bouhier, July 11, 1733, quoted by Henri Harrisse, *L'Abbé Prévost* (Paris, 1896), pp. 212–13.

<sup>5</sup> By his novels, by his periodical, the *Pour et Contre*, and by his translations of Richardson, Prévost succeeded in gaining a living independent of the pensions frequently given in those days to favored writers.

<sup>6</sup> Twenty volumes, Didot, Paris, 1733–40. Prévost himself was the author of most of this work, but he did not write Vol. II, p. 83, to the end; Vol. III, pp. 1–48; Vol. XVII, p. 25, to the end; Vol. XVIII entire; Vol. XIX, pp. 25–48. A discussion of this question will appear later.

<sup>7</sup> Harrisse, *op. cit.*, pp. 213–14, 252–53, 271–73.

<sup>8</sup> *PC* (*Pour et Contre*), I, 12; I, 217; VI, 312; IX, 122.

Although Prévost's fame today rightly rests upon his one enduring novel, *Manon Lescaut*, his activity as a popularizer in France of English literature was not without considerable influence upon the literary history of the eighteenth century and is worthy of a separate study. This article will consider the attitude of the Abbé Prévost toward Shakespeare. The subject has already attracted the attention of certain critics who have discussed it briefly in passing. Their conclusions, in sum, are as follows.

"Cet abbé," writes M. Jusserand, "était hérétique dans l'âme; il s'exprime sans respect sur les anciens et sur les règles; et il le fait, ce qui était alors sans exemple, au profit de l'auteur d'*Hamlet*.<sup>1</sup> "Prévost," says Joseph Texte, "forcé de vivre en Angleterre, et d'y gagner sa vie, s'y anglicisa plus qu'aucun autre écrivain du dix-huitième siècle."<sup>2</sup>

Faguet says: "Prévost est entièrement favorable à Shakespeare. . . . Sa critique est singulièrement juste."<sup>3</sup> M. Baldensperger says that "dans le *Pour et Contre*, en 1738, Prévost . . . félicite le poète [Shakespeare]—dont il donnera jusqu'à une biographie circonstanciée—de n'avoir pas connu les Anciens. . . . *Hamlet*—comparé à *Electre*—la *Tempête*, les *Joyeuses Commères*, *Othello*, sont l'objet spécial d'un examen sympathique. . . . Prévost donne à son anglo-manie sa libre expression."<sup>4</sup> M. Schroeder thinks that "Prévost comprend mieux que Voltaire les audacieuses envolées de Shakespeare. . . . Par l'intelligence qu'il a eue de la plupart des beautés shakespeareennes, Prévost a singulièrement devancé les Français de son temps."<sup>5</sup> It has thus become customary to remark that, while Voltaire shows only a rather narrow and timid admiration for Shakespeare, Prévost sets scarcely any limit to his enthusiasm and carries it even to the extreme of a veritable Anglomania. However, M. Schroeder himself later brings forward a modification of his own previous opinion, though he does not explain the reasons for his change of heart. This is what he says: "Shakespeare lui inspire

<sup>1</sup> J. J. Jusserand, *Shakespeare en France sous l'ancien régime* (Paris, 1898), p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Texte, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire* (Paris, 1895), p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> E. Faguet, "Shakespeare," *Propos de théâtre* (Paris, 1903), p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> P. Baldensperger, "Esquisse d'une histoire de Shakespeare en France," *Etudes d'histoire littéraire* (2<sup>e</sup> série, 1910), pp. 159-60.

<sup>5</sup> V. Schroeder, *l'Abbé Prévost, sa vie, ses romans* (Paris, 1898), p. 44.

[à Prévost], comme à Voltaire, une antipathie mêlée d'admiration. Il s'incline devant la vigueur de ses peintures, la saisissante beauté de ses sujets, il comprend même la philosophie profonde qui anime ses drames, il concède qu'ils font penser, mais les intrigues touffues, mais le mélange presque constant du tragique et du comique devaient le choquer et le déconcerter.<sup>1</sup> These differences of opinion make desirable a somewhat detailed examination of the works of Prévost himself.

Seventeen hundred and thirty-one is the year and the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*<sup>2</sup> the book in which for the first time Prévost speaks of Shakespeare. There he gives expression to an admiration which is rather keen but quite general and lacking in definiteness. He says:

J'ai vu plusieurs de leurs pièces de théâtre qui m'ont paru ne le céder ni aux grecques ni aux françaises. J'ose dire même qu'elles les surpasseroient, si leurs poètes y mettoient plus de régularité;<sup>3</sup> mais pour la beauté des sentimens, soit tendres, soit sublimes; pour cette force tragique qui remue le fond du cœur, et qui excite infailliblement les passions dans l'âme la plus endormie; pour l'énergie des expressions, et l'art de conduire les événements, ou de ménager les situations, je n'ai rien lu, ni en grec ni en françois qui l'emporte sur le théâtre d'Angleterre. Le *Hamlet* de Shakespeare, le *Don Sébastien* de Dryden, l'*Orphan* et la *Conspiration de Venise* d'Otway, plusieurs pièces de Congreve, de Farquhar, etc., sont des tragédies admirables, où l'on trouve mille beautés réunies. Quelques-unes sont un peu défigurées par un mélange de bouffonneries indignes du cothurne; mais c'est un défaut que les Anglois ont reconnu eux-mêmes, et dont ils ont commencé à se corriger.<sup>4</sup>

These are the words of the mentor of the young marquis in the *Mémoires*; there is no reason why the passage should not be accepted as an expression of the first impressions received by Prévost himself during his stay in England. The beauty and the tragic force of the English drama have struck him forcefully. Like most French travelers of the period, he is impressed with the vigor of the English

<sup>1</sup> V. Schroeder, "L'Abbé Prévost journaliste," *Revue du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (1914), pp. 136-37.

<sup>2</sup> Vols. I-IV in 1728, Vols. V-VII in 1731.

<sup>3</sup> The same criticism and the same praise appear seven years later in Louis Riccoboni, *Réflexions historiques et critiques sur les différens théâtres de l'Europe* (1738, Amsterdam, 1740), p. 139.

<sup>4</sup> *Œuvres choisies de l'Abbé Prévost* (Paris, 1810-16, 39 vols.), II, 281.

language. English tragedy moves him to the "fond du cœur," and it rouses "infailliblement les passions dans l'âme la plus endormie." We know from Prévost's other work how impressionable he was. It is at this same period that he was writing the novels that drew forth "torrents of tears" from Mlle Aïssé and from Jean-Jacques; soon, with his translations of Richardson, he was rousing the emotions of all the "âmes sensibles" of France. Nevertheless Prévost finds "bouffonneries" in Shakespeare. Fortunately the English themselves have already perceived them and have even begun to correct them. This last observation comes frequently from the Abbé's pen. It is very significant as evidence of the fact that his taste remains to a great degree French in quality and has been anglicized much less than has often been thought. Let us not, therefore, fail to note that from the very beginning his enthusiasm is somewhat restrained. Still, in spite of its lack of definiteness, the general tone of the passage is sufficiently favorable to permit M. Jusserand to call Prévost "un vrai *anglomane* et . . . un des premiers en date."<sup>1</sup> If the Abbé had written only the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, we might accept M. Jusserand's words as forming an accurate summing up of the Abbé Prévost's general attitude toward English literature and toward Shakespeare. Since, however, the Abbé is also the author of a weekly magazine, the *Pour et Contre*, which appeared from 1733 to 1740, we must look there likewise for his literary opinions, and we must examine them in more detail.

The magic spell cast over Prévost by his first stay in England (1728-30) seems to have lost its power in 1733, for the Abbé wrote in the *Pour et Contre* a passage as severe as the one in the *Mémoires* had been favorable:

Le théâtre n'a point encore secoué le joug de la férocité. C'est d'elle qu'un Sophocle ou qu'un Euripide anglois<sup>2</sup> emprunte les idées du sublime. Quelles idées, grands Dieux! et qu'elles choquent la sage nature! Les tragédies sont ici dénuées de mœurs et de caractères. C'est une histoire de trente ou de quarante années, histoire plus fabuleuse souvent que celles de nos vieux romanciers; mais en revanche les héroïnes de la pièce sont folles,

<sup>1</sup> Jusserand, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> This is directed at Shakespeare. In 1700 Boyer's *Grammar* had said: "Nous avons . . . un Sophocle et un Euripide en Shakespeare."—Jusserand, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

et presque tous les héros se donnent la mort. Qu'on ajoute à cela quelques apparitions d'esprits, une pompe funèbre et un récit de bataille, voilà une tragédie angloise qui sera louée sans aucun ménagement.<sup>1</sup> Les comédies angloises sont plus estimables. Une variété presqu'infinie de caractères leur donne un air d'élégance et de vivacité qui plaît aux connaisseurs; je voudrois seulement qu'on les dépouillât de ces plaisanteries basses et de ces expressions grossières qui ne devroient plaire qu'à la plus vile populace.<sup>2</sup>

It is to be noted that this harsh estimate is not softened, as far as tragedy is concerned, by a single qualification. It is hard to find the cause for these bitter criticisms. They may perhaps be due to the cold welcome Prévost received in England on the occasion of his second journey,<sup>3</sup> although this hypothesis does not accord with the scrupulous sense of justice we find to be generally characteristic of the Abbé. However, he may well have fallen here below his usual level. A more acceptable explanation, though this too is not wholly satisfactory, may be found in the possible influence of the *Lettres philosophiques* of Voltaire, which Prévost had seen in manuscript and which he had in his possession, as he tells us, "pendant quelque tems" before September, 1733.<sup>4</sup> Can this "quelque tems" go back as far as the beginning of July, when these criticisms of the English drama appeared in the third number of the *Pour et Contre*? It is not at all impossible. Voltaire likewise had given the preference to English comedy over English tragedy, though even his criticism of the latter was not as sweepingly bitter and unfavorable as Prévost's is here. Ordinarily, while Prévost admired very much some of Voltaire's work, he did not let himself be overawed by his prestige. If such influence is to be admitted here, we must grant also that Prévost soon freed himself from it. It is quite possible that this severe judgment is due to the recent reading of some English play which gave Prévost a particularly unfavorable impression. Could this play have been *Hamlet* itself?<sup>5</sup> In any case, these various hypotheses are nothing more than possible explanations which are in no way certain. The criticism is much more severe than we should have expected from Prévost's pen.

<sup>1</sup> Is Prévost attacking *Hamlet*? These details at least suggest such a possibility.

<sup>2</sup> *PC*, I, 71-72.

<sup>3</sup> V. Schroeder, *l'Abbé Prévost, sa vie, ses romans* (Paris, 1898), p. 63 and n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, I, 242.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2.

It is not long before we again find Shakespeare treated by the author of the *Pour et Contre*. This time it is apropos of the Abbé's review of Voltaire's *Lettres philosophiques*. Prévost's articles appeared during the last half of September and the first half of October, 1733,<sup>1</sup> about a month after the English edition of the *Lettres*<sup>2</sup> and six months before the first French edition.<sup>3</sup> The very complete résumé given by Prévost probably constitutes, therefore, a sort of first French appearance of this important work.<sup>4</sup> Here Prévost shows himself much more favorable to Shakespeare. "Il ne paroît dans ses ouvrages ni goût ni connaissance des règles; mais il s'y trouve partout des étincelles du plus beau feu du monde. C'étoit une imagination naturellement sublime, qui n'ayant point d'autre guide qu'elle-même, s'est égarée souvent dans sa route."<sup>5</sup> This is a paraphrase of Voltaire, but it is significant that Prévost softens the expression as it is given in the English edition—"not so much as a single spark of good taste." "Elle est outrée," says Prévost, "et elle a choqué ici bien des gens."<sup>6</sup> Some other slight changes show the same tendencies and seem to express a prudent admiration, greatly tempered by the conviction that Shakespeare would have gained much by being more "regular." Prévost, we notice, maintains that he expressed only the opinion "éclairée" of the English themselves at this period, ordinarily ready enough to admit that Shakespeare contained "saillies dérégées et de bizarres imaginations," and that taste had progressed far since his time. For the most extreme and uncompromising expression of this opinion one has only to adduce Rymer,<sup>7</sup> who was not surpassed in unfavorable criticism by Voltaire, and who furnished Voltaire

<sup>1</sup> The second of these two articles is followed by: "Lu et approuvé, ce 22. Septembre 1733, Signé, Souchay."—*PC*, I, 288.

<sup>2</sup> G. Lanson, *les Lettres philosophiques de Voltaire* (critical edition, Paris, 1909), I, xl.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> At least Prévost's review is the first in French mentioned by M. Lanson (*op. cit.*, I, xliv).

<sup>5</sup> *PC*, I, 278-79.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 278, n. b.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Rymer (1641-1713), historiographer royal (1692-1713), compiler of the important collection of historical documents, the *Fædera*, author of a translation of Rapin's *Réflexions sur Aristote* (1674), of the *Tragedies of the Last Age Considered* (1678), and of the *Short View of Tragedy* (1693). Ridiculous as he frequently appears to us now because of his exaggerated respect for the rules, he was in his time a critic of much importance.

himself with many a suggestive vituperation, which the latter was glad in his turn to use against the English dramatist. Perhaps even yet too little emphasis has been placed upon the fact that, if the French of the period were generally inclined to find in Shakespeare faults rather than beauties, they had more than sufficient precedent in the attitude of many English critics highly esteemed in their day.

Prévost corrects Voltaire's verse translation of the *Hamlet* monologue by a prose translation much closer to the original<sup>1</sup> and not surpassed by the translations made later by Le Tourneur and in the nineteenth century by Hugo fils.<sup>2</sup> Some thirty years later than Prévost's translation Voltaire somewhat unwillingly published a literal version<sup>3</sup> better than the Abbé's and in fact very remarkable for its accuracy and vigor.

In this review of Voltaire's *Lettres* Prévost distinguishes himself by the moderation of his criticisms on Shakespeare. He even quotes the favorable part of Shaftesbury's estimate of *Hamlet* and omits the rather unfavorable criticism which this author had expressed on the preceding page.<sup>4</sup> However, we must needs be careful not to number the Abbé too quickly with the enthusiastic admirers of Shakespeare. It is well to recall the fact that by differing discreetly from Voltaire's opinion and by correcting it in some particulars Prévost was able to give himself an attractive rôle. His corrections are accurate, nevertheless, and in any case possess, therefore, a very real merit.

The English dramatist is mentioned by Prévost in Volume V of the *Pour et Contre* (1734) as the author of the tragedy of *Richard III* and of *Othello*, "autre pièce célèbre du même poète."<sup>5</sup> Some remarks on the character of Richard III and of Iago are merely translations from the *Grub Street Journal* and consequently cannot be taken as the opinion of Prévost himself. Later the Abbé translates the flute

<sup>1</sup> Soon after Prévost's articles the *Bibliothèque britannique* also published a literal translation, criticizing Voltaire's version as follows: "Volta à peu près ce que dit Shakespeare; voici ce que Mr. de Voltaire lui fait dire."—II, 124.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mary Gertrude Cushing, *Pierre Le Tourneur* (New York, 1908), pp. 232-35.

<sup>3</sup> Published in the *Appel à toutes les nations* of 1761 and incorrectly added to the *Lettres philosophiques* in the posthumous Kehl edition (1784-89). Cf. G. Lanson, *op. cit.*, II, 82, note to l. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks* (4th ed., Dublin, 1737-43), "Advice to an Author," pp. 275-76.

<sup>5</sup> *PC*, V, 304, nn. a and b.

scene which occurs between Hamlet and Guildenstern (Act III, scene 2), and he adds:

Ce dialogue a paru d'une invention et d'un sens admirable à M. Addisson. On l'a regardé de même après lui. Depuis peu, quelques critiques, moins esclaves de leur respect pour M. Addisson, ont osé condamner ce qu'il a loué, et sont parvenus par le ridicule qu'ils ont jeté sur les raisonnemens de Hamlet à les faire estimer leur juste prix. Il est vrai, disent-ils, que Hamlet passe dans une partie de la pièce pour un prince dont la raison est affoiblie; mais comme sa folie est feinte, il ne paroît fou que lorsqu'il le veut, et il ne veut point le paroître avec Guildenstern. D'ailleurs, ce seroit mal défendre le jugement de M. Addisson que d'avoir recours à la folie de Hamlet pour le justifier.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that as far as Prévost was concerned there was no debate as to whether Hamlet's madness was real or feigned. He unhesitatingly accepted the latter theory.

Most of the passage just cited is given as the opinion of English critics. However, by the phrase "sont parvenus à les faire estimer leur juste prix," Prévost frankly approves of their judgment, which is sufficiently unfavorable both to Addison and to Shakespeare. The passage shows that "Anglomania" has dwindled remarkably since the days of the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*. Still these criticisms are directed at a rather minor detail, and we remember that already in the *Mémoires* Prévost was severe enough with regard to the "bouffonneries."

In Volume IV of the *Pour et Contre* mention is made of Milton, Shakespeare, Shaftesbury, and Nassau, who are called "ces quatre grands hommes."<sup>2</sup> In the following volume we find this interesting remark: "Nous conviendrons que Corneille est plus régulier que Shakespeare, sans avouer qu'il soit supérieur à lui, parce qu'il est certain que Shakespeare regagne par la force ce qu'il perd du côté de l'exactitude."<sup>3</sup> At first sight one would naturally take this passage for a favorable appreciation by Prévost and for a proof of a most praiseworthy breadth of view. In reality we find ourselves dealing with something which is of frequent occurrence in the *Pour et Contre* and against which it is necessary to be ever on guard. All this part of his periodical is, in Prévost's words, merely "un mélange traduit

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 115-18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 253.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 88-89.

de l'anglois" and put in the mouth of the "avocat du Temple Bar," who figured for a brief time in the Abbé's magazine as a mouthpiece, after the manner of the *Spectator Papers*, of those Englishmen who were admirers of French literature as well as of their own.<sup>1</sup> Prévost states that the passage consists of "quelques observations littéraires d'un Anglois, ausquelles je ne changerai dans la traduction que ce qu'elles pourroient avoir d'offensant pour la France."<sup>2</sup> We may therefore conclude that the citation is perhaps in accord with Prévost's own thought, but we cannot be sure. Ordinarily in the eighteenth century Corneille was relegated by the French to a place in the second rank, below Racine and even below Voltaire. For the English, however, it was more natural to prefer Corneille, who had had so much influence upon the dramatic work of their own Dryden, and who was, in any case, much nearer the norm of English taste than the more classic Racine. This explains the fact that Prévost should have put the name of Corneille in the mouth of a representative of the English point of view. At any rate, we may admit as significant that Prévost was not scandalized by the preference given to the "force" of Shakespeare over the "exactitude" of Corneille; he tolerates the opinion at least, even if he does not go so far as to approve it openly.

We come now to Volume XIV of the *Pour et Contre*, where for the first time Prévost devotes much space to Shakespeare, and where he proposes to give a fairly complete idea of his life and works. Shakespeare is the subject of almost two whole numbers (CXCIV-CXCV), which appeared during the first part of January, 1738. M. Jusserand gives the following appreciation of their content:

Prévost . . . parle de lui [Shakespeare] avec une audace bien plus grande que Voltaire, mais qui attira beaucoup moins l'attention. Cet abbé était hérétique dans l'âme; il s'exprime sans respect sur les anciens et sur les règles; et il le fait, ce qui était alors sans exemple,<sup>3</sup> au profit de l'auteur d'*Hamlet*. Shakespeare, dit-il, "n'a pas connu "les anciens; tant mieux, car peut-être le contact lui aurait fait perdre "quelque chose de cette chaleur, de cette impétuosité et de ce délice

<sup>1</sup> *PC*, V, 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, in the *Essai sur la poésie épique* of 1733, Voltaire had already said apropos of Shakespeare that the man of genius "laisse loin derrière lui tout ce qui n'est que raison et qu'exactitude."—*Oeuvres* (Paris: Garnier, 1883), VIII, 318.

"admirable," si l'on peut s'exprimer ainsi, qui éclate dans ses moindres "productions. Il n'observe pas les unités, mais en récompense, si l'on passe "aux mœurs, aux caractères, au ressort des passions et à l'expression des "sentiments, on ne trouvera presque rien, dans toutes ses œuvres, qui ne "puisse être justifié et, de toutes parts, il s'y présente des beautés auxquelles "on ne saurait accorder trop d'éloges."<sup>1</sup>

If we examine carefully the text of the *Pour et Contre*, it seems that M. Jusserand has exaggerated the boldness of the opinions Prévost held with regard to English literature in general and Shakespeare in particular. Prévost was not such a literary "heretic," nor was he so completely freed of respect for the ancients and their rules. The citations given by M. Jusserand are taken from the *Pour et Contre*, XIV, 27 and 33. It is upon these passages and upon the general tone of the matter included between pages 26 and 48 that he bases his conclusions. One important fact seems, however, to have been neglected by M. Jusserand, as it has been by M. Baldensperger also; namely, that the abundant and accurate details with regard to the life of Shakespeare, the very favorable judgments just cited and others like them, the information about the *Winter's Tale*,<sup>2</sup> *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King John*, *Richard III*, *Henry VI*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and finally the comparison between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, all this is nothing but "la traduction de certains fragmens de l'histoire littéraire des Anglois."<sup>3</sup> Thus we have here only the opinion of an English admirer of Shakespeare, and not the expression of Prévost's own opinions. In fact, after this long article on Shakespeare, Prévost is already thinking of bringing forward a "correction." He says:

Avant que de hasarder mes propres réflexions sur le caractère et le mérite de Shakespeare, je me rends aux instances de quelques amateurs du Parnasse anglois, qui brûlant de connoître ce poète célèbre autrement que par des observations générales sur sa personne et sur ses écrits, me pressent de publier le sujet de quelques-unes de ses meilleures pièces. Je ne regrette point le tems que ce dessein m'a fait mettre à les relire.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The italics are by M. Jusserand.

<sup>2</sup> Jusserand, *op. cit.*, p. 173; cf. *supra*, pp. 179-80.

<sup>3</sup> M. Jusserand says (*op. cit.*, p. 173): "Prévost sait l'original des pièces de Shakespeare; il connaît la nouvelle de Greene utilisée dans le *Conte d'Hiver*." But the allusion to the "Delectable History of Dorastus and Faunia" (*PC*, XIV, 32) is also contained in the part translated from the English and in no way proves that Prévost knew more of it than its title.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 25.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Prévost was entirely correct in calling No. CXCIV a translation from the English, for it is possible to locate the original source. In his study of Shakespeare, Prévost used Rowe's edition, probably the second, which appeared in 1714, and which the Abbé called "la plus répandue."<sup>1</sup> From this edition, or from the first of 1709-10, he obtained his information and the greater part of his opinions. It is this work which contains the "fragmens de l'histoire littéraire des Anglois," translated by the editor of the *Pour et Contre*, Prévost.

This edition offered three different sources of information with regard to Shakespeare: Rowe's<sup>2</sup> essay entitled "Some Account of the Life, etc., of Mr. William Shakespeare,"<sup>3</sup> Gildon's<sup>4</sup> "An Essay on the Art, Rise, and Progress of the Stage in Greece, Rome, and England,"<sup>5</sup> and finally his "Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare."<sup>6</sup> The first essay, the one written by Rowe, is the source of the "fragmens de l'histoire littéraire des Anglois," that is to say, the source of that number of the *Pour et Contre* so often invoked as proof of the breadth of view, even of the Anglomania, of Prévost. At the end of this same number a short passage (pp. 47-48) is indicated by Prévost himself as being taken from Gildon's first essay, though Prévost gives only the title and not the author's name.<sup>7</sup> The "Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare" were of great help to Prévost in the preparation of the following number.

In the first of the Shakespeare numbers Prévost followed Rowe very closely, omitting, however, some parts as uninteresting or too long and often changing the order of arrangement. The whole is intentionally and frankly a translation.<sup>8</sup>

We must then pass on to the following number of the *Pour et Contre* in order to find with certainty Prévost's own opinions with

<sup>1</sup> *PC*, XIV, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolas Rowe (1674-1718), English dramatist, author of the *Fair Penitent*, *Jane Shore*, etc., and editor of the *Works of Shakespeare* (1709-10).

<sup>3</sup> Nicolas Rowe, *Shakespeare's Works* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1709), I, i-xl.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Gildon (1665-1724), an English writer little known today. He was attacked by Pope in the *Dunciad*, somewhat unjustly, as it seems.

<sup>5</sup> Rowe, *op. cit.*, VII (Curl, 1710), i-lxvii.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 257-444.

<sup>7</sup> *PC*, XIV, 47, n. a, "Essay, on the Art, rise, and progress of the stage." The French printer did not yet know his English very well.

<sup>8</sup> Cf., for instance, Rowe, pp. ii-iii, with *PC*, XIV, 26.

regard to Shakespeare.<sup>1</sup> However—one is surprised to discover it—even the plot analyses are not by Prévost. Once more he adopts the easier method of translation, but this time without indicating the fact. By the sentence, "je ne regrette point le tems que ce dessein m'a fait mettre à les relire,"<sup>2</sup> he even seems to give intentionally a false impression.

The source used in this case is Gildon's second essay, the "Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare." Prévost begins with *The Tempest*, the analysis of whose plot he translates from Gildon. He tells us that it is "l'une des plus célèbres" of Shakespeare's plays, and then continues:

Les Anglois ont trouvé peu de défauts dans cette pièce. Ils prétendent même que les règles essentielles y sont observées; et que pour ce qui regarde les caractères et le stile, il n'y a point de juste reproche à faire à l'auteur. Je traduirai quelque jour la scène du Prince de Naples et de Miranda, qui est remarquable en effet par mille traits dignes de la réputation de Shakespeare. Mais j'ose dire que malgré ces étincelles de goût et de génie,<sup>3</sup> qui rachètent bien des grossièretés, la *Tempête* passerait sur notre théâtre pour une pièce ridicule.<sup>4</sup>

Prévost passes off the opinion of a single English critic for that of the nation in general and seems to wish us to think his knowledge of the state of English opinion greater than perhaps it was. Apparently the admiration expressed for the scene between the Prince of Naples and Miranda is really Prévost's own. The last sentence of the criticism just cited as his final estimate of *The Tempest* is evidently the expression of his own feeling. It is probable enough that a French audience would scarcely have tolerated Caliban.

There follows a translation of an English apology for the use of magic in the play,<sup>5</sup> but Prévost does not approve. We no longer see the enthusiastic "anglomane" who praises everything English without hesitation or distinction. There are "bien des grossièretés" and only "des étincelles de goût et de génie."

<sup>1</sup> In this same number there are also "quelques remarques d'un des plus beaux esprits de Londres" (*PC*, XIV, 50), but this time it is not difficult, either by means of Prévost's wording or by the quotation marks, to separate them from the opinions of the author of the *Pour et Contre*.

<sup>2</sup> *PC*, XIV, 49; cf. *supra*, p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Voltaire (*Lettres phil.*, II, 79), "sans la moindre étincelle de bon goût."

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 52-53.

<sup>5</sup> Gildon, pp. 264-65.

Prévost, however, finds the *Merry Wives of Windsor*—*les Femmes de Windsor en bonne humeur*, as he translates it—more to his taste. The plot is recounted in detail, again after Gildon,<sup>1</sup> and Prévost continues: “Ajoutons, pour augmenter l'idée qu'on doit s'en former, que la reine Elizabeth en faisoit ses délices; que suivant le jugement de Dryden, le principal caractère est ce qu'on a jamais vu de plus parfait sur la scène comique; et que si l'on en croit le fameux duc de Buckingham, c'est un morceau qui sera toujours inimitable.”<sup>2</sup> This information with regard to Queen Elizabeth, Dryden, and the Duke of Buckingham was obtained by Prévost without unnecessary difficulty; the first item is to be found in Rowe's essay,<sup>3</sup> from which the Abbé had already taken it for the preceding number of the *Pour et Contre*,<sup>4</sup> and the two others in Gildon's “Remarks.”<sup>5</sup>

“Il y a deux intrigues dans cette pièce,” continues Prévost, “mais il faut confesser qu'elles sont jointes avec plus d'art et de vraisemblance que dans la plupart des pièces angloises.”<sup>6</sup> This is in no way original; it is a direct translation from the English.<sup>7</sup> He says:

Les critiques anglois<sup>8</sup> confessent, que cette comédie n'est pas absolument conforme aux règles et à la pratique des anciens. La durée est d'environ trois jours. L'action est double, et la scène, qui embrasse Windsor et les lieux voisins, ne répond pas mieux à la règle de l'unité. Mais ils prétendent que par la conduite de l'intrigue, l'agrément des situations, la force des caractères, et la finesse de la plaisanterie, elle l'emporte sur le théâtre ancien et moderne. . . . Qui ne regretteroit pas à la fin de cet article, qu'une comédie si vantée soit encore inconnue hors de l'Angleterre? Ne se trouverait-il personne qui mette le public en état d'en juger par une traduction? Je ne déclare pas mes desseins, quoiqu'ils ne soient pas éloignés de l'exécution; mais je puis dire d'avance qu'ayant lu plusieurs fois cette pièce célèbre, et l'ayant vu représentée par les plus fameux acteurs de Londres,<sup>9</sup> j'ai tâché, dans la mesure bornée de mes lumières, d'en porter un jugement fidèle et désintéressé. Le voici en deux mots. En passant sur les défauts que j'ai

<sup>1</sup> Gildon, pp. 285-86.

<sup>2</sup> Page 290.

<sup>2</sup> *PC*, XIV, 56.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 56.

<sup>3</sup> Rowe, *op. cit.*, pp. viii-ix.

<sup>5</sup> Gildon, p. 285.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 37-38.

<sup>8</sup> Always the same tendency to pass off the opinion of a single English critic for that of the nation at large.

<sup>9</sup> Genest, *History of the Drama and Stage in England* (1832), shows that the *Merry Wives* was played several times in London during the time that Prévost was there.

remarqués et que les Anglois sensés sont les premiers à reconnoître,<sup>1</sup> il m'a semblé, en effet, que l'invention, la conduite, et les caractères, méritoient les applaudissements qu'ils ont reçus. Mais ce n'est qu'après un long usage des mœurs et du goût de la nation, que j'ai commencé à juger si favorablement. De sorte que sans ce secours, j'aurais été plus choqué de cent idées du poète, qui m'aurraient paru grossières et ridicules, suivant la manière de penser dans laquelle j'ai été élevé, que je n'aurais été frappé des traits de force et de lumière qui percent au travers de cette ténèbreuse écorce. Si l'on m'objecte que les mœurs et les usages du tems de Plaute et de Térence n'étoient pas moins différens des nôtres et que nous ne laissons pas d'être tout d'un coup sensibles aux beautez que nous découvrons dans leurs pièces, je réponds que non seulement l'étude nous accoutume dès notre jeunesse aux mœurs et aux usages des Romains, mais qu'il y a réellement plus de différence, et j'ose dire plus d'opposition, entre les usages de Londres et de Paris, qu'on ne peut s'en figurer entre ceux de Paris et de l'ancienne Rome: d'où je conclus que la meilleure traduction des *Merry Wives of Windsor*, du moins si elle est littérale, ne fera jamais convenir nos François de l'excellence de cette pièce, et bien moins de la supériorité que les Anglois en prennent droit d'attribuer à leur théâtre.<sup>2</sup>

There is much more originality in this piece of literary criticism than in the preceding. Prévost likes the play, for he has seen it given by "les plus fameux acteurs de Londres," and besides he has read it "plusieurs fois." His intention of giving "un jugement fidèle et désintéressé" is evidently sincere and well carried out in this remarkable example of independent and unprejudiced criticism. The esteem which he here shows for English drama has been developed slowly after "un long usage des mœurs et du goût de la nation" and is not the result of a first rapid impression. Persistent efforts to understand the character and manners of the English people form the basis of his judgments, which are inspired by a clear perception of the relativity of all things in matters of taste. It is not without reason that Prévost observes that Paris is nearer the culture of ancient Rome than it is to that of eighteenth-century London.

Nevertheless we must not fail to notice how general and vague Prévost's appreciations remain. "Des traits de force et de lumière qui percent au travers de cette ténèbreuse écorce"; what does this mean after all? It is an easy way of expressing appreciation without justifying it in any definite manner. Gildon had indicated the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> *PC*, XIV, 61-64.

particular scenes which pleased him. Voltaire had done the same in his remarks apropos of *Julius Caesar*.<sup>1</sup> One is struck by the complacency with which Prévost insists again upon the idea that "les Anglois sensés" join with the French in recognizing and in condemning many faults in Shakespeare.

Prévost next examines *Othello*, "une tragédie que les Anglois ne changeroint pas avec nous contre la meilleure pièce de Corneille ou de Racine."<sup>2</sup> The narrative of the plot differs from that of Gildon in one important detail. The English original reads simply: "But the Moor effectually put his revenge in execution on his wife."<sup>3</sup> Prévost shows a certain familiarity with the play and also rather pronounced traces of French taste when he lengthens the narrative as follows: "Le More, à qui il ne reste plus aucun doute de l'infidélité de sa femme, depuis qu'on lui a persuadé qu'elle a fait présent à Roderigo d'un précieux mouchoir qu'elle avoit reçu de lui, exécute cruellement sa vengeance à la vue des spectateurs, en l'étranglant dans son lit."<sup>4</sup> The phrase "à la vue des spectateurs" implies, it seems, disapproval; at least one can admit that Prévost, more accustomed to the *récits* of the French stage, was astonished at the bolder methods of the English theater; he is still but little "anglicisé," and remains at heart quite thoroughly French.<sup>5</sup>

The Abbé continues:

M. Rymer,<sup>6</sup> le moins indulgent de tous les critiques qui ont fait le procès à Shakespeare, ne paroît pas si prévenu en faveur de cette pièce qu'Addisson et le commun des Anglois. Il accuse sans façon l'auteur d'avoir manqué de jugement dans le choix qu'il a fait d'un nègre pour son héros. Il n'y a personne, dit-il, qui ne traite de supposition monstrueuse l'amour d'une jolie femme pour un objet moins capable de l'attendrir que de l'épouvanter; et loin de s'intéresser au succès d'un si étrange mariage, on ne peut se défendre d'autant d'horreur que de dégoût. D'autres ont prétendu que cet aveugle amour n'est pas sans exemple, et qu'il suffit qu'il soit possible, pour justifier

<sup>1</sup> "Avec quel ravissement je voyais Brutus, tenant encore un poignard teint du sang de César, assembler le peuple romain, et lui parler ainsi du haut de la tribune aux harangues!"—Voltaire, *Oeuvres*, II (1731), 316-18.

<sup>2</sup> *PC*, XIV, 64.

<sup>3</sup> Gildon, p. 409.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 65-66.

<sup>5</sup> Is Prévost concealing his real thoughts in order to seem more in accord with his French readers than he actually is? This is a possible hypothesis and one very dear to Mr. F. B. Bury (cf. "The Abbé Prévost in England," *Scottish Review* [1899], pp. 27-52). However, in favor of this hypothesis we have no conclusive proof, and can admit its possibility only with reserve. Cf. *infra*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 183, note 7.

le poète. On conçoit, disent-ils, qu'une jeune fille qui n'a jamais vu le monde et que l'habitude continue de voir un More a guérie de l'aversion naturelle qu'on a pour des visages de cette couleur, peut se laisser toucher par les soins et les belles actions d'un gallant homme sans aucun égard pour ce qui le défigure aux yeux des autres. . . .

Quand cette apologie seroit beaucoup plus forte, il me semble, comme à M. Rymer, que ce qui suffiroit pour justifier Desdemona, ou pour donner de la vraisemblance à sa passion, ne disculperoit pas Shakespeare. Il est aisément d'en sentir la raison. Je pense aussi avec le même critique, que le fameux mouchoir d'Othello est une preuve trop foible pour servir de fondement au cruel excès de sa jalouse, et je ne puis trouver autant de force et de beauté que M. Addisson dans une scène où les mouvements les plus furieux de ce mari jaloux portent sur une cause si légère.<sup>1</sup> Le caractère de Iago peut être plus aisément défendu. Je ne scais sur quel principe M. Rymer prétend qu'un traître n'est point un personnage qui puisse être souffert sur la scène. La véritable vertu, dont il dit que le théâtre doit toujours être une école, suppose la connaissance et la haine du vice; l'une ne peut s'acquérir, et l'autre se fortifier, que par des exemples.<sup>2</sup> D'ailleurs, il faudroit bannir, par la même règle, l'amour, l'ambition, la colère, etc., avec tous leurs effets, tels que l'effusion du sang, le meurtre, etc. Comment se figurer que la vertu puisse être représentée sans obstacles? Et quels obstacles trouvent-elle plus ordinairement que ceux du vice?

Il en est de la critique d'*Othello* comme de celle du *Cid*.<sup>3</sup> Toute juste qu'on la trouve, elle n'a jamais empêché les Anglois de courir en foule à toutes les représentations de cette pièce, et de la regarder comme un des plus beaux ouvrages de Shakespeare.<sup>4</sup>

Elle cède néanmoins le rang dans leur estime à la tragédie de *Hamlet* qu'ils s'accordent tous à nommer le chef-d'œuvre du Prince de leur théâtre.<sup>5</sup>

In his objection to Othello's color Prévost is completely in accord with Gildon, who says: "I have drawn the fable with as much favour to the author as I possibly cou'd, yet I must own that the faults found in it by Mr. Rymer are but too visible for the most part. That of making a negro of the hero or chief character of the play, wou'd shock any one."<sup>6</sup> Gildon continues the discussion in the same tone

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Thomas Rymer, *Short View of Tragedy* (J. Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, New York and Oxford, 1908).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Prévost's defense of his own *Manon Lescaut*. He there takes the same position as here (*PC*, III, 137-39).

<sup>3</sup> La Bruyère (*Des ouvrages de l'esprit*, par. 30) had spoken in the same manner of the triumph of the *Cid* over hostile critics. Du Bois had observed likewise: "Ceux qui ont lu la critique du *Cid*, n'en ont pas moins de plaisir à voir cette tragédie."—*Réflexions sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719; ed. of 1755), I, 306 and 309.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 66-68.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> Gildon, p. 410.

as Prévost. It is probable that this whole question was very familiar to Prévost from discussions which he must have frequently heard from Englishmen and French refugees of his acquaintance. The allusions to Addison seem to be made by Prévost on his own account; they are not found in Gildon. It is to be noted that Prévost in this criticism leans toward the views of the English critic who was most unfavorable to Shakespeare, namely Rymer. Later in the century the "bonhomme" Ducis also objected to the color of Othello and lightened it by several shades.<sup>1</sup> Prévost does not consider the "mouchoir" as too "familiar," and that fact is indicative of a certain breadth of view when we remember the blame heaped upon Hugo a hundred years later for his temerity in using the word on the stage; however, Prévost does think that the handkerchief constitutes too slight a cause to justify the mad jealousy of Othello. In this matter he differs from Gildon, who was willing to admit that "jealousie is born often of very slight occasions, especially in the breasts of men of those warmer climates."<sup>2</sup>

In short, Prévost does not say positively that he approves of the English admiration for *Othello*, but it seems that the sentence near the end of his remarks is equivalent to a defense of the play. All of these criticisms, in his opinion, are after all without effect upon the public. In the case of *Othello* as in that of the *Cid*, the crowd rejects the opinions of those literary men who see only faults; it admires the genius which is superior to the rules, and it overlooks the "faults" in favor of the beauties.<sup>3</sup>

It would seem that in *Hamlet* we should have the climax of Prévost's literary criticism. This is in no way the case. As before the Abbé resumes the plot, but he gives this short addition to Gildon: "Les fossoyeurs chantent, en remuant des os et des têtes de morts. Hamlet entre dans une conversation fort singulière avec eux."<sup>4</sup> This illuminating sentence offers us nothing which is not to be found

<sup>1</sup> On Ducis consult E. Preston Dargan, "Shakespeare and Ducis," *Modern Philology*, X (1912-13), 137-78.

<sup>2</sup> Gildon, p. 411.

<sup>3</sup> Du Bos gives to the "sentiment" of the crowd "cultivée" the final judgment in cases of this sort and refuses to grant final authority either to the professional critics or to the rules.

<sup>4</sup> *PC*, XIV, 72.

previously in Voltaire,<sup>1</sup> and about the same time, or later, in Riccoboni,<sup>2</sup> D'Argens,<sup>3</sup> or Le Blanc.<sup>4</sup> This scene did then impress unfavorably all the most important French critics who at that time discussed Shakespeare's plays. Gildon also objects to it, but only because he thinks it out of place in a tragedy, and not, like some of the French critics, because he thinks it ridiculous in itself.<sup>5</sup>

Prévost continues: "Cette étrange rapsodie, où l'on n'aperçoit ni ordre ni vraisemblance, et où le comique et le tragique sont confusément mêlés,<sup>6</sup> passe pour le chef-d'œuvre de Shakespeare. On ne m'en croiroit pas, si je ne promettois d'expliquer dans quelque autre feuille les causes de cette admiration."<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately this explanation never appeared.<sup>8</sup> It seems that we are almost forced to admit that Prévost had lost the admiration for *Hamlet* expressed in the *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*. Perhaps, at the time when he wrote the *Mémoires*, he had not read the play for himself, and was praising it solely on its reputation; but this scarcely seems probable. It is possible that in the *Pour et Contre* he wished simply to forestall the objections which he could well expect his readers to make; by promising to refute their criticisms in a later number he expected, it may be, to pique their curiosity the more. Perhaps the difference between the Abbé's earlier opinion and his later attitude is sufficiently explained by the difference in age; the Prévost of forty has his enthusiasm less easily awakened than the Prévost of thirty. Without more evidence than we have it is impossible to find the solution of the problem.

<sup>1</sup> *Lettres phil.*, II, 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Réflexions . . . sur les différens théâtres de l'Europe* (1738; Amsterdam, 1740), p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Lettres juives*, IV (1738), 237.

<sup>4</sup> *Lettres d'un François*, II (1745), 298.

<sup>5</sup> Gildon, p. 404.

<sup>6</sup> Prévost, like his fellow-countrymen, was shocked at the romantic mingling of tragic and comic elements. Likewise Gildon (*loc. cit.*, and in the *Essay on the Art, Rise, and Progress of the Stage*, p. ix). Cf. also Paul Hamelius, *Die Kritik in der englischen Literatur des 17ten und 18ten Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1897), pp. 56-57.

<sup>7</sup> *PC*, XIV, 72.

<sup>8</sup> At the beginning of this same number (*PC*, XIV, 49; cf. *supra*, p. 187) Prévost had spoken of his intention to "hasarder ses propres réflexions sur le caractère et le mérite de Shakespeare." Was he then later afraid to put his plan into execution? Cf. *supra*, p. 192, note 5, for Mr. Bury's opinion that Prévost was not sincere in the *Pour et Contre*. But why consider that he was more sincere elsewhere, unless we have positive proof of some sort, or at least evidence?

The originality of Prévost in this criticism on Shakespeare, enthusiastically praised as it has been, seems to us of the slightest. In one whole number the Abbé openly limits himself to giving only the *English* point of view—and this, once it is examined, proves to be almost wholly that of Rowe; in the second number he is almost always very near to Gildon in thought if not in language. On *Hamlet* the Abbé has nothing of value, and the little he does say is entirely in the spirit of his contemporaries, Voltaire included. *The Tempest* does not please him. *Othello* is criticized in the conventional manner, although Prévost does go so far as to admit that the play was successful in spite of the rules, comparing it in this regard with the *Cid*; this perhaps is a discreet suggestion of a liking for *Othello*, but we cannot be sure. In any case, Prévost figures as but a timid advocate rather than as an "Anglomaniac" or as an enthusiastic "champion." Only the *Merry Wives*<sup>1</sup> seems to evoke a really personal admiration, but even that is expressed in the vaguest and most general terms.

Prévost's position is midway between that of the more enthusiastic among the English and that of the hostile French. In all essential matters he is not far from the feeling of Gildon, more reserved than Rowe. Gildon thought that "Shakespeare is indeed stor'd with a great many beauties, but they are in a heap of rubbish."<sup>2</sup> Prévost appears sometimes timid and hesitating in his opinions. Those which he acknowledges as his own show that he was much less bold, much less in advance of the spirit of his time, than has been thought. He remains, in short, very much an eighteenth-century Frenchman in his taste, very much a classicist.<sup>3</sup> Occasionally, however, this classicism seems to tend cautiously toward greater liberality of viewpoint.

<sup>1</sup> This is surprising, since the *Merry Wives* is scarce the type of play one would expect Prévost to enjoy by preference. Why did he not put the basket scene among the "bouffonneries"?

<sup>2</sup> Gildon, *Remarks*, p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Staab merely follows the tradition when he speaks of the "anglophile Leitung" of the Abbé Prévost (*Das Journal Etranger unter dem Abbé Prévost* [Strasburg, 1912], p. 2). Moreover, he does not take account of the fact that Prévost, by his attitude, shows that he is generally of the opinion that "la raison et le bon goût" are on the side of the French (*ibid.*, p. 17). He brings forward nothing to change our opinion that Prévost was little in advance of the French critics of his time. In speaking of Pope—and this is noteworthy—Prévost is more enthusiastic than when he is discussing Shakespeare. This is especially

It seems that, either from the limitations of his taste or from timidity in the face of French opinion, Prévost did not dare to embrace the cause of the English poet too ardently, but contented himself with a moderation in general friendly but rather cool. It is possible that he did share to a greater extent than he admits the more favorable English attitude, but that he found French hostility too strong to oppose it more vigorously, especially after the cooling of the ardor of Voltaire, who more and more was directing his powerful influence in a direction contrary to Shakespeare. Voltaire—and this is not surprising—was more decided than Prévost, both in his first enthusiasm and in his later hostility.<sup>1</sup> Only the *Mémoires*, a production of Prévost's youth and of the period of exile, seems to give evidence of a moment of enthusiasm on his part. His other judgments are, for the most part, just and moderate but rather lukewarm. The criticism is intelligent but, in spite of the paeans sung in its honor, seems quite unenthusiastic. We are certainly still far removed from the zealous championship of a Diderot, and nearer to a cool *arbiter elegantiarum*.

We can no longer, as formerly, look upon the Abbé Prévost as one of the first ardent champions of Shakespeare in France. One more legend, among so many that have grown up about his life and work,<sup>2</sup> has disappeared, and its disappearance carries along with it more regret than did the others. Less blindly anglicized, Prévost is, however, more cosmopolitan and reasonable, and his desire to be constantly just is much to his credit. The inadequateness of his information is to be explained by his journalistic work, which gave him little time for long preparation, and which forced him always to write rapidly in order to gain a living. We must not expect to find him a scholar. In spite of these facts he did choose as his sources of

the case also in his treatment of Lillo's *London Merchant*. Even to the end of his life the Abbé did not change his opinion of Shakespeare. The *Lettres de Mentor*, a posthumous work (1764), has this note: "Shakespeare, Otway, Lee, Addison, etc., n'ont pas une scène comparable dans sa totalité, par la force, aux belles scènes des grands tragiques françois."—*Oeuvres*, XXXIV, 375, note.

<sup>1</sup> In illustration of this tendency we have already called attention to a part of Voltaire's criticism of *Julius Caesar* (cf. *supra*, p. 192, note 1, and p. 186, note 3). Let the reader turn again also to the *Discours sur la tragédie* published as a Preface to *Brutus* in 1731, and to the *Essai sur la poésie épique* of 1733. The *Lettres philosophiques* (1734) are already indicative of more hostile tendencies.

<sup>2</sup> See Henry Harrisse, *op. cit.*

information one enthusiastic English judgment and another which was average and moderate in tone; the oversevere criticisms of Rymer did not meet with his approval, and, except for a detail or two, he passed them over in silence. The information given by Prévost—no less valuable because it was translated—and his moderation were of real service to the cause of Shakespeare in France.<sup>1</sup> Prévost invites the French to study a drama new to them. He tells them frankly that in it they will find many things to shock their ideas of good taste, but he also tells them that they will find, if they seek without prejudice, beauties worthy of their study. That certainly is the state of mind in which a foreign literature should always be approached. To have seen and called attention to that fact nearly a hundred years before Mme de Staël is not after all a slight merit.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be pointed out that by taking for the ideas of Prévost himself the section translated from Rowe, a contemporary of the Abbé set the example for modern critics. This contemporary is the Abbé Le Blanc. Cf. his *Lettres d'un François*, II (1745), 294-95. It is significant, at least for the history of his influence, that Prévost was so soon accorded the reputation of being excessively favorable to the English. The attribution was perhaps more justified than it is now possible for us to determine. However, Le Blanc saw in Prévost a dangerous rival who threatened the position he coveted for himself as a *connaisseur* of English literature. He was therefore not unwilling to find—perhaps even unjustly—a pretext for criticizing him.

## G. CHAPMAN'S "COMMONPLACE BOOK"

Every reader of George Chapman's tragedies and poems has probably been struck by the number and variety of the similes and figures used by the poet in his lofty strain, but none more than Professor T. M. Parrott, who, commenting on one of the opening tirades of Monsieur in *Bussy d'Ambois*, remarked:<sup>1</sup>

This speech affords a striking example of one of Chapman's methods of composition with which a careful student of his work becomes increasingly familiar. It is a mere mosaic of ideas, examples, figures even, taken directly from one of Chapman's favorite classic authors, Plutarch. . . . Numerous instances of this method will occur hereafter, and in each case the passage in Chapman is so close to its original as to suggest that he composed it with the classic author before him, or—more probably—that, like his friend Jonson, he kept a commonplace book into which he translated favorite bits and on which he drew at will when composing his plays and poems.

Ten years' desultory intercourse with Chapman led us, on the other hand, to recognize more and more clearly that our dramatist was far more familiar with the neo-Latinists of the early Renaissance than the average Elizabethan playwright.<sup>2</sup> His most conscious adoption and equally pedantic treatment of the simile<sup>3</sup> as a rhetorical figure which no true poetry can go without if it is to have any grace of sentiment or scholarly dignity are but some of the features which seemed to us characteristic of the average sixteenth-century humanist and strongly reminded us of their views on that subject, among others of the ideas expressed by Erasmus in his epistle to Petrus Aegidius, "celebratissimae civitatis Antverpiensis," dated "Basileae anno a Christo nato MDXIII, Idibus Octobriis":

Nihil quidem vulgarium xeniorum ad amicu[m] adeo non vulgarem, sed plurimas in uno libello gemmas mitto. Cur enim non sic appelle[m] ὄποιωντας, ex opulentissimo summorum auctorum mundo selectas? . . . Sic enim

<sup>1</sup> *The Tragedies of George Chapman*, edited by Thomas Marc Parrott. London: Routledge, 1910, p. 548.

<sup>2</sup> We have proved Chapman's indebtedness to Petrarch, Johannes Pontanus, Angelus Politianus, among others, in *Revue Germanique*, 1913, IV, 428 ff., and in *Mod. Phil.*, XIII (1915-16), 215-38.

<sup>3</sup> Chapman sometimes warns the reader and prints *Simile* in the margin. See for instance *Revenge of Bussy*, II, i, 181.

augurabar, quod . . . intelligerem non nitorem modo, sed universam prope sermonis dignitatem a metaphoris proficiisci. Nihil autem aliud est παραβολὴ, quam Cicero collationem vocat, quam explicata metaphora. . . . Metaphora sola cumulatius praestat universa quam exornationae reliquae singula. Delectare vis? Nulla plus habet festivitatis. Docere studes? Non alia probat vel efficacius vel apertius. . . . Tolle metaphorae supellectilem ex Oratoribus, jejuna erunt omnia. Tolle Parabolas e Prophetis & Evangelicis literis, magnam gratiae partem detraxeris. . . . Gustum duntaxat dare voluimus, ut ingenia juvenum ad his similia conquirenda excitaremus.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Erasmus, that high authority "*de Copia Verborum*," had strongly recommended the frequent use of similes for both artistic and didactic ends; he had urged the youths to collect (*conquirere*) metaphors, ready-made metaphors, so that they should have them at hand when they wrote a poem or an oration; nay more, he did not hesitate in naming the Greek and Latin classics who had to be most carefully read with a view to gathering the "exquisite gems" out of the "abstruse treasures of the Muses":

Nuper dum Aristotelem, Plinium ac Plutarchum locupletandis Adagiorum Chiliadibus relego, dum Annaeum Senecam a mendis quibus extinctus erat, repurgo, has obiter annotavi tibi munuscum haudquaquam ingratum futuras. . . . E Plutarcho complura recensuimus, partim quod is auctor Graecus est, partim quod in hoc genere sic excellit, ut cum hoc nemo vel eloquentissimorum jure conferri queat. E Seneca non ita multa decerpsumus. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Now, although Chapman often turned to Seneca tragicus, to Epictetus, or even to Catullus for his imagery, it is unquestionable that he "sucked his honey" from Plutarch more systematically than from any other writer of antiquity. Was this a mere coincidence, that is to say, was he drawn to Plutarch by his own instinctive preference for that author, or did he only follow Erasmus' advice?

The second alternative seems to be the only true one, not only because it would be on the face of it a surprising thing that Chapman the Scholar should not have read and oftentimes consulted the *Colloquia* and *Adagia*, but because there is, we shall see, ample

<sup>1</sup> *Erasmi Opera Omnia*, Lugduni Batavorum, cura & impensis Petri Vander AA, MDCCIII, Tome I, 559-60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

evidence that Chapman was as familiar with Erasmus' works as a Rabelais or a Montaigne may have been.

Up to now, as far as we know, the only link, and a very tenuous one, which connected Chapman with Erasmus for students of Elizabethan literature, was C. W. Dilkes' note on the following passage of *Monsieur d'Olive*:

For mine own part, I should so ill endure the loss of a wife that if I lost her this week, I'd have another by the beginning o' th' next.<sup>1</sup>

Dilke refers to one of the *Colloquia Familiaria*, entitled *Τεροντολογία*, in which the much married Polygamus declares:

Nunquam vixi caelebs ultra dies decem. . . . Si haec octava moreretur hodie, perinde ducerem nonam.<sup>2</sup>

But it seems to us that there are a good many other disregarded links between Chapman's works and the *Colloquia*.

Quintilian's comparison of a banquet with a battle: "I will compare the noble service of a feast with the honourable service of the field"<sup>3</sup> may have been suggested to Chapman by Latin comedy, *Captivi*, V, i, and *Menaechmi*, I, iii, but he may as well have taken the idea from Erasmus' colloquy *πολυδαρία* (*Dispar Convivium*):

*Spudus*: Quem probas in patinis ordinem?

*Apitus*: Eumdem quam Pyrrhus in acie, etc. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Again, Chapman's *A Good Woman*<sup>5</sup> may have been largely built on Plutarch's *Conjugalia Praecepta*, as Professor Parrott suggests, but it may just as well be an adaptation of a passage of Erasmus' *Uxor Meμφίγαμος sive Conjugium*, for which the Dutch humanist has freely borrowed from the same Plutarchian source.<sup>6</sup>

Chapman's frequent comparison of "a slave bound face to face to Death till death,"<sup>7</sup> an allusion to Mezentius' barbarous practice,<sup>8</sup> was first used as a simile by Erasmus in his "Αγαμος γάμος":

<sup>1</sup> *Monsieur d'Olive*, III, i, 72-74; *Old English Plays*, Vol. III, 1814.

<sup>2</sup> *Erasmi Op.*, Tome I, 736.

<sup>3</sup> *May-Day*, IV, iii, 22-24.

<sup>4</sup> *Erasmi Op.*, Tome I, 819.

<sup>5</sup> *George Chapman's Poems* (Chatto & Windus, 1904), p. 151.

<sup>6</sup> *Erasmi Op.*, Tome I, 703-4.

<sup>7</sup> *Byron's Tragedy*, V, iv, 38; *Bussy*, V, i, 115-16; *Eastward Ho*, II, iii, 89-90; *Caesar and Pompey*, V, ii, 82; *Poems*, p. 124b.

<sup>8</sup> *Aen.*, viii, 484-87.

Mihi plane videtur hoc factum [i.e., compelling a nice girl to marry a nasty old man] Mezentio dignum: qui mortua, ut inquit Maro, iungebat corpora vivis, Componens manibusque manus atque oribus ora.<sup>1</sup>

And it is likely that Chapman got it from Erasmus.

Similarly Chapman's comparison of "A mote, man, with the most, that with the sun Is only seen"<sup>2</sup> is borrowed from Erasmus' colloquium, *Apotheosis Reuchlini Capnionis*:

Nec aliter oppleverant aërem totum, quam videmus in solis radiis volitare minuta corpuscula, quae vocant *άτρομα*.<sup>3</sup>

The title and fundamental idea of Chapman's *Tears of Peace* strongly reminds one of Erasmus' disquisition called *Querela Pacis*.

Chapman's belief that "a good man dying utters oracles"<sup>4</sup> may be traced to Plato's *Apology*, XXX: Καὶ γὰρ εἴμι ἡδη ἐνταῦθα ἐν φῷ μάλιστ' ἀνθρώποι χρησμαφοῦσιν, ὅταν μελλωσιν ἀποθανεῖσθαι. But we may as well refer to the following passage of Erasmus' *Encomium Morae, sub fine*:

Idem arbitror esse in causa cur laborantibus vicina morte, simile quidam soleat accidere ut tamquam afflati prodigiosa quaedam loquantur.

It is even more certain that Chapman had the *Adagia* for a companion book. His metaphor of "man, a quick corse,"<sup>5</sup> "a breathing sepulchre,"<sup>6</sup> is lifted direct from the *Adagia*:

Vivum cadaver, vivum sepulchrum, *Ἐμψυχος νεκρός* (Soph. in *Antigone*). Οὐ τίθεμ' ἐγὼ ζῆν τούτον, δλλ' ἐμψυχον ἡγοῦμαι νεκρόν. In eos dicet qui sic vivunt ut nihil vita dignum agant. Lucianus senem decrepitum *ἐμψυχόν τυν τάφον*, i.e., vivum quoddam sepulchrum appellat.

"Hic Rhodus, hic saltus,"<sup>7</sup> and "Etiam capillus unus habet umbram suam,"<sup>8</sup> two of Chapman's numerous Latin quotations, are among the *Adagia*. The simile of a shipwreck in the haven<sup>9</sup> is Erasmus' adagium: "in portu impingere." Chapman's constant

<sup>1</sup> Erasmi *Op.*, Tome I, 827.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Giles Gooscap, V, ii, 270. Cf. *Poems*, p. 25a: ". . . As gilt atoms in the sun appear" and p. 254b.

<sup>3</sup> Erasmi *Op.*, Tome I, 689.

<sup>4</sup> *Poems*, p. 333a. See also *Gentleman Usher*, IV, iii, 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Byron's Tragedy*, V, iv, 35.

<sup>6</sup> *Poeme*, p. 126b.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

<sup>9</sup> Bussy, I, i, 33; *Monsieur d'Orice*, I, i, 175; *Poems*, p. 123b, 196a.

association of "a circle," "circular" with the idea of perfection,<sup>1</sup> an association traceable to Plutarch, is probably based on Erasmus' adagium:

*Circulum absolvere: Metaphora sumpta videtur a mathematicis, apud quos circularis figura perfectissima absolutissima judicatur.*<sup>2</sup>

Chapman's advice, "Ship not in one bark all your ability,"<sup>3</sup> is but the translation of Erasmus' adagium, "ne uni navi facultates."

All that presumptive evidence would make it likely that Chapman had read a good deal of Erasmus and that it was on Erasmus' suggestion that he had preferably drawn on Plutarch for his poetic similes. But there is positive evidence that Chapman's commonplace book was partially identical with—possibly only an expansion and enrichment of—Erasmus' *Parabolae sive Similia*, that very collection of similes to which Erasmus alludes in his letter to Petrus Aegidius.

Professor Parrott has already remarked that the Latin text, and not the Greek original, suggested Chapman's diction whenever he adapts Plutarch, so that we may all the more readily assume that if an unusually large proportion of the metaphors picked out by Erasmus are found in Chapman, it is nearly certain that he picked them himself from Erasmus, and not from Plutarch, or Seneca, or Pliny.

How unusually large that proportion is the following parallels may show:

"EX PLUTARCHI MORALIBUS"

ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Ut qui praeter navigatis syrtibus,  
juxta portum frangit navem. . . .

CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

They clearly sail over rocks and  
shelves,  
But . . . shipwreck in the deeps.  
[Poems, p. 187a.]

Aer qui est in auribus, nisi trans-  
quillus sit et carens propria voce, sed  
tinnitu fuerit ac tumultu plenus,  
non exakte recipit ea quae dicuntur:  
. . . Sic ea pars quae Philosophia

For as the air contain'd within our  
ears,  
If it be not in quiet, nor refrains  
Troubling our hearing with offensive  
sounds

<sup>1</sup> *Monsieur d'Olive*, I, i. 32; *Poems*, pp. 129b, 143a, 209, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the following passage of the adage *Scarabeus aquilam quaerit*: "Vere proditum est a philosophis eam figuram, quam vocant sphæricam non modo pulcherrimam esse, verum etiam modis omnibus optimam. . . ."

<sup>3</sup> *Widow's Tears*, III, ii, 71; *Charlemagne*, I, i, 414; *Poems*, 77b, etc.

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

dicta, judicat, si quid intus obstrepat,  
& obtinniat, non recte judicabit,  
quae foris accipiuntur.

Ut in tumultu non audimus quid  
nobis dicatur; Ita irati non admittimus  
alienum consilium, nisi ratio  
loquatur intus, quae tumultum animi  
compescat.

Morbi corporis pulsu, & colore  
deprehenduntur. . . .

Qui venantur bestias, induunt  
exuvium cervi: qui aucupantur  
aves, plumatis utuntur tunicis,  
caventque ne tauris appareant in  
veste purpurea, rubra, aut alba ele-  
phantis, quod hoc colore irritentur:  
Sic qui velit feram nationem cicurare,  
domareque, moribus ac vestitu semet  
illi ad tempus accommodet, neces-  
sum est.

Ut Cyclops exoculatus manus  
quoquo versam porrigebat, nullu  
certo *scopo*: Ita magnus Rex, cui  
desit prudentia, quidvis aggreditur  
ingenti rerum tumultu, sed nullo  
judicio.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

(But our affected instrument of hear-  
ing,  
Replete with noises and singing in  
itself)  
It faithfully receives no other voices;  
So of all judgments, if within them-  
selves  
They suffer spleen and are tumultuous,  
They cannot equal differences with-  
out them.<sup>1</sup>

[*Byron's Conspiracy*, V, ii, 58-66.]

For as the body's pulse in physic is  
A little thing, yet therein th'arteries  
Betray their motion and disclose to Art  
The strength or weakness of the vital  
part. [Poems, p. 181b.]

## We must fit

Our government to men, as men to it:  
In old time they that hunted savage  
beasts  
Are said to clothe themselves in  
savage skins;  
They that were fowlers, when they  
went on fowling,  
Wore garments made with wings  
resembling fowls;  
To bulls we must not show ourselves  
in red  
Nor to the warlike elephant in white.  
[*Byron's Conspiracy*, II, ii, 33-40.]

## As the Cyclop

That having lost his eye, struck every  
way,  
His blows directed to no certain  
scope. . . .  
So, I remov'd once, all his armies  
shook,  
Panted, and fainted, and were ever  
flying.  
[*Byron's Conspiracy*, III, ii, 97-104.]

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Byron's Tragedy*, V, iii, 114 ff.

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Quemadmodum imperiti artifices,  
cum statuis exiguis magnas subdunt  
bases, magis conspicuum reddunt  
illarum exiguitatem; Ita fortuna  
si pusillo animo munus amplum  
addat, indicat et arguit magis animi  
humilitatem.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

Foolish statuaries,  
That under little saints suppose great  
bases  
Make less to sense the saints; and  
so, where Fortune  
Advanceth vile minds to states  
great and noble,  
She much the more exposeth them  
to shame,  
Not able to make good and fill their  
bases  
With a conformed structure.

[*Byron's Conspiracy*, IV, i, 179-85.]

Flammam primum emicantem  
multus comitatur fumus; qui qui-  
dem evanescit, jam invalescente &  
explicante se flamma. . . . Fumus  
gloriae invidia est.

Such love is like a smoky fire  
In a cold morning; though the fire be  
cheerful,  
Yet is the smoke so sour and cumber-  
some,  
Twere better lose the fire than find  
the smoke:  
Such an attendant then as smoke to  
fire,  
Is jealousy to love.

[*All Fools*, I, ii, 59-64.]

Ut difficillimum ac periculosum est  
annosas arbores, quae jam late  
sparsere radices, revellere loco, &  
alio transplantare. . . .

Thus in the summer a tall flourishing  
tree,  
Transplanted by strong hand . . . .  
makes a show  
Of Spring, tempting the eye with  
wanton blossom;  
But not the sun with all her amorous  
smiles,  
The dews of morning or the tears of  
night  
Can root her fibres in the earth  
again. . . .  
But the tree withers. . . .

[*Chabot*, V, iii, 52 ff.]

Ut ferrum, aut aes usu splendescit:  
Sic exercendis negotiis enitescit animi  
vigor.

And like burnish'd steel,  
After long use he shined.

[*Bussy*, I, i, 75-76.]

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Arbores invidiae, vetulaeque subnascentes arbusculas umbra sua premunt, nec sinunt efflorescere. . . .

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

Though I am grown, by right of birth and arms,  
Into a greater kingdom, I will spread  
With no more shade than may admit that kingdom  
Her proper, natural, and wonted fruits.

[*Byron's Conspiracy*, I, i, 118 ff.]

Obsoniorum egregii artifices condimentis nonnihil austeri admiscent, quo dulcedinis tollant satietatem: sic adulatores fictam quandam libertatem ac severitatem admiscent, ut nunquam magis adulentur, quam cum videntur objurgare ac libere loqui.

For as a man whom Art hath flattery taught,  
And is at all parts master of his craft;  
With long and varied praises doth sometimes  
Mix by the way some slight and pervial crimes  
As sauce; to give his flatteries taste and scope . . .

[*Poems*, p. 197b.]

Chamaeleon omnem imitatur colorem praeterquam album: Sic adulator in turpibus nihil non imitatur, solum quod honestum est, imitari non potest.

And as your chameleon varies all colours o' th' rainbow, but<sup>1</sup> white and red, so must your true courtier be able to vary his countenance through all humours. Some colours likewise his face may change upon occasion, black or blue it may, but red and white at no hand.

[*Monsieur d'Olive*, III, ii, 24.]

Nutrices pueros lapsos non objurgant et puniunt, sed accurrentes erigunt, deinde objurgant. . . .

And, as a careful mother I have seen  
Chide her loved child; snatch'd with some fear from danger. . . .

[*Poems*, p. 114b.]

Ut Colossi seu statuae male libratae, saepius subvertuntur. . . .

Great and immodest braveries again,  
Like statues much too high made

Statuae magnitudine moleque sua  
librantur & consistunt: at reges  
stulti subvertuntur.

for their bases,  
Are overturn'd as soon as given their places,

[*Revenge of Bussy*, III, ii, 58-60.]

<sup>1</sup> The text has "both," which would be a sin against Renaissance Bestiaries.

## ERASMIUS' "PARABOLAE"

Ut imperiti statuarii pulchram existimant statuam, quae sit vastissima mole: Sic reges nonnulli fastu et asperitate se egregios Principes videri putant.

Ut Colossi foris insignes, Deum aliquem repreäsentant, intus pleni luto, clavis, sordibus: Ita rex purpura, equis, auro, satellitio magnificus, in animo nihil habet, praeter sordidos affectus & inscitiam.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

(Great men) do imitate  
Unskilful statuaries, who suppose,  
In forming a Colossus, if they make  
him  
Straddle enough, strut, and look  
big, and gape,  
Their work is goodly: so men merely  
great  
In their affected gravity of voice,  
Sourness of countenance, manners'  
cruelty,  
Authority, wealth, and all the spawn  
of Fortune,  
Think they bear all the kingdom's  
worth before them;  
Yet differ not from those colossic  
statues,  
Which, with heroic forms without  
o'er-spread,  
Within are nought but mortar,  
flint, and lead.

[*Bussy*, I, i, 6 ff.]

Quemadmodum fulgor prius emi-  
cat, quam audiatur tonitru, quod  
sonitus auribus excipiatur, lumini  
visus occurrat. . . .

Uti sol si immineat hominis vertici,  
aut prorsum tollit umbram, aut  
minimam reddit: Sic ingens gloria  
extinguit invidiam.

As the thunder  
Seems, by men's duller hearing than  
their sight,  
To break a great time after lightning  
forth,  
Yet both at one time tear the labour-  
ing cloud,  
So men think penance of their ills is  
slow,  
Though th' ill and penance still to-  
gether go.

[*Revenge of Bussy*, V, i, 9 ff.]

As the sun  
At height and passive o'er the crowns  
of men,  
His beams diffus'd, and downright  
pour'd on them,  
Cast but a little or no shade at all:  
So he that is advanc'd above the  
heads

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Ut scarabei, ac vultures offenduntur unguentis: Ita non omnibus placent optima.

Scarabei fugiunt unguenta, delectantur foetoribus: Sic nonnullis pessima pro optimis placent.

Ut athletae non ferunt coronam nisi vicerint: Sic bonis viris praemia felicitatis non ante contingunt quam peracto hujus vitae certamine.

Ignis facile accenditur in paleis & pilis leporinis: sed idem mox extinguitur.

Luna cum soli conjungitur, tum obscuratur, & occultatur: cum abest, luet: Contra proba uxor praesente marito, maxime conspici debet: eodem absente, maxime condi & latere.

Cum spirat Boreas, conatur vi vestem revellere, at homo magis astringit pallium: quod si sol tepido vento demulserit, jam sponte & tunicam abjicit: Sic uxor conans

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

Of all his emulators with high light Prevents their envies, and deprives them quite.

[*Byron's Tragedy*, V, i, 140 ff.]

She (Envy) feeds on outcast entrails like a kite. . . . but touch her With any precious ointment, and you kill her.

[*Bussy*, II, i, 5 ff.]

Wrastlers for games know they shall never be,  
Till their strife end and they have victory,  
Crown'd with their garlands, nor receive their game,  
And in our heaven's strife know not we the same?

[*Poems*, p. 334a, b.]

He that soon Sparkles and flourishes, as soon is gone.

[*Poems*, p. 157a.]

She is not Moon-like, that the Sun, her spouse,  
Being furthest off, is clear and glorious:  
And being near, grows pallid and obscure;  
But in her husband's presence, is most pure,  
In all chaste ornaments, bright still with him,  
And in his absence, all retired and dim.

[*Poems*, p. 151b.]

You have heard  
The fiction of the north wind and the sun,  
Both working on a traveller, and contending

## ERASMIUS' "PARABOLAE"

conviciis maritum a luxu revocare,  
magis irritat: si placide ferat &  
roget, magis efficit.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

Which had most power to take his  
cloak from him:  
Which when the wind attempted, he  
roar'd out  
Outrageous blasts at him to force it off,  
That wrapt it closer on: when the  
calm sun  
(The wind once leaving) charg'd  
him with still beams  
Which made him cast off both his  
cloak and coat;  
Like whom should men do. If ye  
wish your wives  
Should leave dislik'd things, seek it  
not with rage,  
But use calm warnings and kind  
manly means.

[*Revenge of Bussy*, I, ii, 79 ff.]

Ut Geometrae negant moveri  
lineas & superficies sine corpore, sed  
una cum corporibus moveri: Sic  
uxor & in seriis & ludieris, & risu, &  
laetis & tristibus, accommodabit se  
marito.

As geometers  
Teach that no lines nor superficies  
Do move themselves, but still accom-  
pany  
The motions of their bodies; so poor  
wives  
Must not pursue, nor have their own  
affections,  
But to their husbands' earnest, and  
their jests,  
To their austerities of looks, and  
laughters  
Like parasites and slaves, fit their  
dispositions.<sup>1</sup>

[*Revenge of Bussy*, I, ii, 53 ff.]

Qui ministrant elephantis, non  
sumunt lucidam vestem: qui tauris,  
purpuream non induunt: nam his  
coloribus efferantur. Tigrides tym-  
panorum strepitum non ferunt: Ita  
uxor ab iis debet abstinere, quibus  
senserit maritum vehementer offendit.

And as those that in Elephants  
delight,  
Never come near them in weeds  
rich and bright,  
Nor bulls approach in scarlet; since  
those hues  
Through both those beasts enraged  
affects diffuse;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Poems*, p. 152a.

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Ut tigrides, si quis tympanis circumsonet, in rabiem agi dicuntur,  
adeo ut seipsas denique discerpant.

....

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

And as from Tigers men the Timbrel's sound  
And Cymbal's keep away; since they abound  
Thereby in fury and their own flesh tear;  
So when t'a good wife, it is made appear  
That rich attire and curiosity  
In wires, tires, shadows, do displease the eye  
Of her loved husband; music, dancing breeds  
Offence in him; she lays by all those weeds,  
Leaves dancing, music; and at every part  
Studies to please and does it from her heart. [Poems, 152a, b.]

Others' advancements, others' fames desiring,  
Thirsting, exploring, praising, and admiring,  
Like lewd adulterers that their own wives scorn  
And other men's with all their wealth adorn. [Poems, p. 122a.]

As to men that pine  
And burn with fevers you fill cups of wine,  
The choleric honey give, and fulsome meat  
On sick men force that at the daintiest sweat,  
Who yet, their hurtful tempers turn'd to good,  
Mild spirits generate and gentle blood  
With restitution of their natural heat,  
Even cheese and water-cresses they will eat

Quidam fastiditis propriis uxoribus & formosis & amantibus, cum scorto mercede coeunt. ....

Quemadmodum adulteri alienas uxores adamant, suas contemnunt: Sic quidam aliorum bonis magis delectantur, sua elevant aut etiam negligunt.

Qui viro malo addit opes & glori- am, is febricitanti ministrat vinum, bilioso mel, coeliacis obsonia, quae morbum animi, hoc est stultitiam, augeant.

Ut qui morbo laborant, cibos purissimos & lautissimos fastidiunt & recusant, si quis edere compellat, iidem restituti bonae valetudini, caseo quoque, aut cepe lubenter vescuntur: ita stultis magnifica fortuna injucunda, sapientibus etiam humilis ac tenuis fortuna suavis.

## ERASMIUS' "PARABOLAE"

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

With taste enough; so make but  
strong your mind  
With her fit rule, and eates of  
humblest kind  
You taste with height of pleasure.

[*Poems*, p. 335b.]

Non timet mare qui non navigat.  
.... At supersticiosus omnia  
timet, terram, mare, aerem, coelum,  
tenebras, lumen, strepitum, silentium,  
somnium,

He that fears the gods  
For guard of any goodness, all things  
fears,  
Earth, seas, and air, heaven, dark-  
ness, broad day,  
Rumour and silence and his very  
shade.

[*Caesar and Pompey*, I, i, 67 ff.]

Qui dentibus laborant, protinus  
Medicum adeunt, malum exponunt;  
qui febre tenentur, accersunt; at  
phreneticus, nec accersit, nec admit-  
tit, ob morbi vehementiam: Ita  
qui vitia sua celant, nec admonentem  
patiuntur, de his nulla salutis spes  
est.

If our teeth, head, or but our finger  
ache,  
We straight seek the physician; if a  
fever  
Or any cureful malady we take,  
The grave physician is desired ever;  
But if proud melancholy, lunacy,  
Or direct madness overheat our  
brains,  
We rage, beat out, or the physicians  
fly,  
Losing with vehemence even the  
sense of pains;  
So of offenders, they are past recure,  
That with a tyrannous spleen, their  
stings extend  
'Gainst their reprovers.

[*Poems*, p. 105a.]

Quemadmodum araneae ex se telas  
texunt: Ita quidam ex seipsis com-  
miniscuntur fabulas ac mendacia,  
cum nihil subsit veri.

The envious man hath been here,  
who, like a venomous spider, drawing  
this subtle thread out of himself,  
cunningly spread it into the ears of  
the many. ....

[*Poems*, p. 195b.]

Ut Lamias fabulae narrant foris  
oculatas esse, domi oculis in vase  
reconditis, nihil videre; ita quidam

.... Without an eye, or at most  
seeing all by one sight, like the  
Lamiae who had but one eye to

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

in alienis perspicaces sunt, ad sua  
caecutiunt.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

serve all their directions, which as  
any one of them went abroad she  
put on and put off when she came  
home. . . .

[*Poems*, p. 195a.]

Civitates portas habent quasdam  
nefastas per quas educuntur nocentes  
ad supplicium capitis, ejiciuntur  
purgamenta, nihil autem infertur  
sacrum aut purum; Sic aures curio-  
sorum non transeunt nisi homicidia,  
adulteria.

And as in ancient cities, 'twas the  
guise  
To have some ports of sad and hap-  
less vent  
Through which all executed men  
they sent,  
All filth, all offal, cast from what  
purged sin,  
Nought chaste or sacred there going  
out or in:  
So through men's refuse ears will  
nothing pierce  
That's good or elegant.<sup>1</sup>

[*Poems*, p. 119a.]

Quemadmodum aquilae & leones  
cum ambulant, introrsum vertunt  
ungues, ne conterantur, ac servant in  
praedam illorum aciem: sic animi  
vigorem non convenit alienis rebus  
noscendis absumere, sed servare ad  
usum necessariorum.

But as of lions it is said, and eagles,  
That when they go, they draw their  
seres and talons  
Close up, to shun rebating of their  
sharpness:  
So our wit's sharpness, which we  
should employ  
In noblest knowledge, we should  
never waste  
In vile and vulgar admirations.<sup>2</sup>

[*Revenge of Bussy*, III, ii, 17 ff.]

Ut Sicyae, quod est in corpore  
pessimum, id attrahunt: Sic curio-  
sorum aures, quod est in hominum  
vita vitiosissimum, id libentissime  
audiunt.

Sicyae quod est pessimum attrah-  
unt; Sic quidam suis bonis non  
fruuntur, sed malis expendendis  
discruciantur.

But as your cupping-glasses still  
exhale  
The humour that is ever worst of all,  
In all the flesh; so these spiced con-  
sciented men,  
The worst of things explore still,  
and retain.

[*Poems*, p. 187b.]

<sup>1</sup> See also *Poems*, p. 187b.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183b.

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Frusta suber appenditur retibus  
ut natent, si plumbum annexum  
deorsum trahat, & in aequo teneat:  
Ita frusta praecepsit bene vivendi  
instituimus, si malitia addita non  
sinit e stultitia emergere.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

Our nets must still be clogg'd with  
heavy lead,  
To make them sink and catch; for  
cheerful gold  
Was never found in the Pierian  
streams,  
But wants and scorns and shames for  
silver sold.

[*Poems*, p. 105b.]

Ut vultures ad extincta corpora  
odore feruntur, sana non sentiunt;  
Sic inimicus, si quid deliqueris,  
statim olfacit, atque eo confestim  
accurrit, ad recte facta stupidus.

I heard but the report  
Of his accusers and his enemies,  
Who never mention in his character  
Shadows of any virtue in those men  
They would depress: like crows and  
carrion birds,  
They fly o'er flowery meads, clear  
springs, fair gardens,  
And stoop at carcasses.<sup>1</sup>

[*Chabot*, IV, i, 10 ff.]

Ut muscae a levibus locis velut  
speculis dilabuntur, asperis & cavis  
incident: Sic quidam bonorum oblieti,  
tristium memoriam urgent, ac  
premunt.

(Envy) is like a fly  
That passes all the body's soundest  
parts  
And dwells upon the sores.<sup>2</sup>

[*Bussy*, II, i, 15-16.]

## "EX ARISTOTELE, PLINIO, THEOPHRASTO."

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Ut natura gemmas altissime recon-  
didit, vilia passim obvia sunt: Ita  
quaesunt optima, paucissimis nota-  
sunt, nec nisi summo studio eruuntur.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

Where it (obscurity) shroudeth  
itself in the heart of his subject . . . .  
with that darkness will I still labour  
to be shadowed. Rich minerals  
are digged out of the bowels of the  
earth, not found in the superficies  
and dust of it. [Poems, p. 21.]

Sicut echo non sonat nisi cum  
reddit acceptam vocem . . . .

As doth an echo beat back violent  
sounds  
With their own forces. . . .  
[*Byron's Conspiracy*, II, ii, 152-53.]

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117a.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 187a and 433a.

## ERASMUS' "PARABOLAE"

Sicut primum pictura coepit ab umbris & lineis, deinde monochromata, mox accessit lumen & umbrae una cum colorum varietate, donec ad summam artificii pervenit admirationem. . . .

Quemadmodum Protogenes pictor Apellem ex unica linea cognovit, nunquam alioqui visum; Ita ex unico responso ingenium & prudentialiam viri deprehendet, qui sit ipse sapiens.

Ut stultum sit relictis fontibus  
consectari rivulos. . . .

Ut aromatum, florum, siniliumque  
odor gravior sentitur e longinquo  
quam e proximis (offendunt enim  
nonnunquam naribus admota, quae  
procul delectabant). . . .

Ut fuci, cum ipsi non mellificent,  
tamen illarum insidiantur laboribus:  
Ita sunt qui nihil ipsi excudant,  
sed aliorum vigiliis elaborata furto  
sibi vendicant.

## CHAPMAN'S ADAPTATION

It serves not a skilful painter's  
turn to draw the figure of a face only  
to make known who it represents;  
but he must limn, give lustre, shadow  
and heightening.

[*Poems*, p. 21.]

. . . . As if she [Nature] intended  
to do like the painter that came to  
see Apelles, drew that subtle line  
for a masterpiece of his workman-  
ship.

[*Poems*, p. 202a.]

. . . . of taste so much deprav'd,  
that they had rather  
Delight, and satisfy themselves to  
drink  
Of the stream troubl'd, wand'ring  
ne'er so far  
From the clear fount, than of the  
fount itself.

[*Revenge of Bussy*, II, i, 99 ff.]

Fly, fly, you are too near; so odorous  
flowers  
Being held too near the censer of  
our sense,  
Render not pure nor so sincere their  
powers,  
As being held a little distance thence.  
. . . .

[*Poems*, p. 105b.]

What an heroic, more than royal  
spirit  
Bewray'd you in your first speech,  
that defies  
Protection of vile drones that eat the  
honey  
Sweat from laborious virtue.

[*Byron's Conspiracy*, I, i, 117 ff.]

The above list of parallels is by no means exhaustive, and Professor Parrott and I will have many more such parallels to add to those few in our forthcoming edition of G. Chapman's Poems, but

we have adduced, we trust, enough evidence to infer safely that Chapman's commonplace book did exist, and that, although not identical with Erasmus', it had at least annexed large parts of it. All Chapman's borrowings from Plutarch's *Moralia*, in particular, are really nothing but borrowings from Erasmus' *Parabolae*. The same thing may be said roughly too for the excerpts from Pliny.

In one case, however, we can safely assert that Chapman borrowed neither from Plutarch direct, nor from Erasmus, but from the Huguenot poet du Bartas: We refer to the following simile, a favorite one with our author:

But as the ravens, which in Arabia live,  
Having flown all the fields of spices o'er,  
Seize on a stinking carcase. . . .

[*Charlemagne*,<sup>1</sup> Bullen's *Old English Plays*, Vol. III, p. 237.]

Like crows and carrion birds,  
They fly o'er flowery meads, clear springs, fair gardens,  
And stoop at carcases.

[*Chabot*, IV, i, 14-16.]

Before Chapman, G. Peele had used the same image:

Like as the fatal raven . . . .  
Flies by the fair Arabian spiceries,  
Her pleasant gardens and delightsome parks . . . .  
And yet doth stoop with hungry violence  
Upon a piece of hateful carriion.

[*David and Bethsabe*, Works, Vol. II, pp. 29-30, Bullen's edition.]

And before Peele, Du Bartas:

Ainsi que les corbeaux d'une penne venteuse  
Passans les bois pleurans de l'Arabie heureuse,  
Mesprisent les jardins et parcs deliciieux,  
Qui de fleurs esmaillez vont parfumant les cieux,  
Et s'arrestent, gloutons, sur la salle carcasse  
D'un criminel rompu n'aguere à coups de masse.

[*L'arche, 1<sup>re</sup> partie du 2<sup>d</sup> jour de la 2<sup>de</sup> semaine*.]

<sup>1</sup> Our forthcoming edition of that play (Princeton University Press) will show, we think beyond a doubt, that its author is nobody else but Chapman. For an earlier, but less complete, demonstration of that literary fact, see our article: "Un drame élisabéthain anonyme: Charlemagne," *Revue Germanique*, viii, 2, p. 155-171 (Mars 1912).

Professor Parrott, commenting on the history of that image, wrote in 1910:

It is interesting to trace a simile of this sort running from the morning of Elizabethan drama in Peele to its sunset in Shirley. Owing to the uncertainty as to the dates of *David and Bethsabe* and *Charlemagne*, it is difficult to say which of these plays borrowed from the other, or whether both of them drew independently from Du Bartas.

He was not aware at the time that the simile went back to Plutarch<sup>1</sup> and that it could be proved that both Peele and Chapman had read the Du Bartas version of it.

That Chapman and Peele both mention "Arabia," whereas neither Plutarch nor Erasmus refer to that biblical country of "fair spiceries"; that Peele translates literally "jardins et parcs delicieus" by "gardens and delightsome parks"; that Chapman translates literally "jardins de fleurs esmaillez" by "fair gardens, flowery meads" and keeps the original French word "carcasse" in both his versions, those few details would already prove the dependence of both dramatists on Du Bartas. But there is additional evidence, for, just as Mr. P. H. Cheffaud has shown in his monograph on G. Peele that Peele knew Du Bartas and borrowed wholesale passages from *les Semaines*, so we too can prove that Chapman had read Du Bartas, or at least copied extracts from his works and entered them into his own commonplace book. The following four parallels are sufficient to make our contention good:

Car comme le caillou, qui, lissé,  
tombe en l'eau  
D'un vivier sommeilleux, forme un  
petit anneau  
A l'entour de sa cheute, et qu'encore  
il compasse  
Par le doux mouvement qui glisse  
en la surface  
De cet ondelé marbre et crystal  
trémoussant

And as a pebble cast into a spring,  
We see a sort of trembling circles rise,  
One forming other in their issuing,  
Till over all the fount they circulize:  
So this perpetual-motion-making kiss  
Is propagate through all my faculties

[*Poems*, p. 35a.]

And, as in a spring,  
The pliant water, moved with anything,

<sup>1</sup> *Quo medo utilitas capiatur ex inimicis*, IV. We have already seen that this simile is one of Erasmus' *Parabolae*.

Une suite de ronds, qui vont toujours  
croissant,  
Jusqu'à tant qu'à la fin des cercles  
le plus large  
Frappe du fleuve mort et l'un et  
l'autre marge. . . .

[Du Bartas, *Colonies*.]

Ains semblable à la fleur du lin, qui  
naist et tombe  
Tout en un mesme jour, son bers  
serait sa tombe,  
Son printemps son hyver, sa nais-  
sance sa mort.

[*1<sup>re</sup> Semaine, 3<sup>e</sup> jour*, ll. 549-51.]

Brief durant ceste guerre (*le  
chaos*)  
La terre estoit au ciel, & le ciel en  
la terre.  
La terre, l'air, le feu se tenoient  
dans la mer.  
La mer, le feu, la terre estoient  
logez dans l'air.  
L'air, la mer & le feu dans la terre:  
& la terre  
Chez l'air, le feu, la mer.

[*1<sup>re</sup> Sem., 1<sup>er</sup> jour*, ll. 231-36.]

Que plustost ie soy tel qv'vn flevve  
qui naissant  
D'vn sterile rocher govtte à govtte  
descend;  
Mais tant plvs vers Thetis il fvit  
loin de sa sovrcé,  
Augmente ses flots, prend force de  
sa course;  
Fait rage de choquer, de bruire,  
d'escumer  
Et desdaigne orgueilleux la grandeur  
de la mer.

[*L'Arche*, ll. 28-34.]

Let fall into it, puts her motion out  
In perfect circles, that move round  
about  
The gentle fountain, one another  
raising.  
So Truth and Poesy work.

[*Poems*, p. 129b.]

If thou refuse,  
Then my hopes like the flower of  
flaxe receyve  
Their byrthe and grave together.

[*Charlemagne*, p. 176.]

When earth, the air, and sea, in fire  
remain'd;  
When fire, the sea, and earth, the  
air contain'd;  
When air, the earth and fire, the sea  
enclos'd;  
When sea, fire, air, in earth were  
indisposed;  
Nothing, as now, remain'd so out of  
kind.

[*Poems*, p. 4b.]

But as a river from a mountain  
running,  
The further he extends, the greater  
grows,  
And by his thrifty race strengthens  
his stream  
Even to join battle with th' imperious  
sea,  
Disdaining his repulse, and in  
despight  
Of his proud fury, mixeth with his  
main,  
Taking on him his title and com-  
mands. . . .

[*Poems*, p. 50b.]

Thus to the already long inventory of Chapman's neo-Latinist and contemporary French creditors we may add the names of Erasmus and Du Bartas. No doubt—*Fortuna juvante*—more names will be added to those.

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## AN ABC INSCRIBED IN OLD ENGLISH RUNES

The bronze fragment herein described was purchased some years ago in Rome by my friend Professor Clifford H. Moore, who recently turned it over to me for examination and publication of the inscription. It shows the familiar *patina* that is acquired by ancient bronzes, and is a portion of the upper side and rim of what must have been an urn of large size. The left edge is broken roughly, while the right edge seems to have been evened up by cutting. The inscription is on the rim. The general style of the characters and many of their forms are such that at first glance, without detailed examination, one might easily follow the natural presumption that they belonged to some one of the ancient Italic alphabets. But they prove to be Old English runes arranged to represent the Latin alphabet from *a* to *z*, with the *w*-rune inserted between those for *g* and *h*.

Examples of the Latin alphabet done in Old English runes are numerous and well known from manuscripts in the libraries of England and various parts of the continent, as Paris, Munich, Vienna, St. Gall, etc.<sup>1</sup> These may be termed "runic ABC's," to distinguish them briefly from the "futhores" or regular runic alphabets in the futhorc order, like that inscribed on the Thames Knife and several of those in manuscripts. These manuscript alphabets, of both kinds, were "for the most part copied by men of an antiquarian turn of mind but wholly ignorant of what they were copying. In this way the forms have become perverted and their values confused."<sup>2</sup> There are some, however, which are reasonably faithful reproductions. Of the ABC's some represent the full Latin alphabet from *a* to *z*, some *a* to *y*, some *a* to *z* with omission of *y*, and some *a* to *z* with other runes added. A given Latin letter may be represented by two different runes, both of approximately

<sup>1</sup> Hickes, *Linguarum Vett. Septentrionalium Thesaurus*, Vol. III, Table II; Kemble, *On Anglo-Saxon Runes*, Plates XV, XVI, in *Archaeologia* XXVII; Stephens, *Old Northern Runic Monuments*, I, 104-14.

<sup>2</sup> Hempl, *Trans. Am. Phil. Ass.*, XXXII, 189. The promised special treatise on these manuscript alphabets has not yet appeared.

appropriate value, e.g., *d* by the *d*-rune or the *thorn*, *o* by the *othil* or the *os*. There are many more arbitrary variations, the confusion being greatest in the representation of Latin *q* and especially *x*, *y*, *z*.

Ours is the first epigraphical example of such a runic ABC. If we may judge from the plainer style of the characters, which one must not assume to be due merely to the difference in material, and from the relative accuracy in values, it is certainly of earlier date than the manuscript ABC's, with the possible exception of the few which are without the ornate forms and confused values that characterize the majority.

The following is a rough representation of the characters, with superscribed numbers for convenience of reference:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	ꝑ	

Ten of these need no comment, being perfectly normal in form and value, namely:

Nos.	1	2	4	12	13	14	16	18	20	21
=Lat.	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>u</i>

No. 3 differs in the direction of the oblique stroke from the usual Old English *c*-rune. The same variant occurs in two of the important manuscript ABC's, the so-called Marcomannic runes (Kemble, figs. 1, 2; Stephens, nos. 17, 24), also on the smaller Nordendorf brooch and once on the Charnay brooch (Henning, *Deutsche Runen*, pp. 54, 107), and regularly in the shorter Scandinavian futhorc. The same character is repeated, no. 11, answering to Lat. *k*, and again, no. 17, answering to Lat. *g*. The slight variation in no. 17 is hardly sufficient to be regarded as an intentional differentiation. In the manuscript ABC's Lat. *q* is represented sometimes by the same form as the *c*, sometimes by a reversed form of the same, sometimes by other runes having no relation in value to *q*; while Lat. *k* is often represented by the *kalk*, but also arbitrarily by various other runes.

No. 5 is not the *e*-rune, which regularly represents Lat. *e* in the manuscript ABC's, but the *aesc*, the old *a*-rune in its English value of *æ*.

No. 6 has the same form as no. 5, instead of the proper form of the *f*-rune with the oblique strokes turned upward. The error was probably induced by the form of the Lat. *F*.

No. 7 is +, for usual *X=g*.

Nor. 8 is the *w*-rune, inserted here in the same position which it occupies in the futhorc (no. 8, and between the *g*- and the *h*-rune).

No. 9 is virtually identical with no. 4. No such variant of the *h*-rune is quotable, and we must have here the one instance in this ABC of downright confusion with no apparent cause.

No. 10 is not the *i*-rune, but may be intended for the *j*-rune, which has the form + on the Thames Knife (but here only). Another possibility is that the writer was diverted into the futhorc order (*g, w, h, n*) from the point of agreement with the ABC in no. 7, and not only inserted the *w*-rune, but also continued with the *n*-rune as no. 10. For this has nearly the same form as no. 14, the regular *n*-rune.

No. 15 is the *othil*, the original *o*-rune, which in Old English (Northumbrian) came to be used for the mutated *ō*, that is *ā*, while *o* and *ō* were represented by the new *os*. But the *othil* is used for *o* on an old coin (cf. Stephens, *Handbook*, p. 193, no. 74; Wimmer, *Runenschrift*, p. 87). In the manuscript ABC's Lat. *o* is also sometimes represented by the *othil*, but more commonly by the *os* (sometimes with the name *othil* attached). In an ABC of St. Gall (Kemble, fig. 5, Stephens, no. 21) both *othil* and *os* are given for Lat. *o*.

No. 19 is nearer to the form of the *s*-rune which appears on the Charnay brooch and elsewhere, namely *ȝ*, than to its usual Old English form *ȝ*. But in any case the writer was influenced here by the Lat. *Z*.

No. 22 is the rune which in Norse inscriptions stands for the sound resulting from final *s*, namely *z*, later *r*, and commonly transcribed *R*. This *z*-rune was not used in English words, but kept its place in the alphabet, having the same position in that of the Thames Knife as in those of Vadstena and the Charnay brooch. In the manuscript futhorcs and ABC's it is given a variety of values and positions, but most commonly those of either *x* or *y*. In the Runic poem (Kemble, fig. 11) it is given the value of *x* and the name

*eolhx*. In one manuscript (Hickes, Table II, 5) it is placed under Lat. *Y* in the ABC arrangement, but is twice used for *x* in the subscribed runic transcription of *pax vobiscum pax*. In general it is the value of *x* which enjoys the better tradition, and it is plainly this value that is intended in our ABC.

That our ABC is based upon *Old English* runes is of course sufficiently clear from the specifically Old English no. 1; likewise from the value of no. 5 and the form of no. 16. To account for its being found in Italy there are various possibilities. (There is nothing to justify suspicion of a modern fraud, which is unsupported by anything in the appearance of the bronze and is virtually excluded by the internal evidence.) The fragment might have found its way into Italy through antiquarian hands in recent times, just as one side of the runic Franks Casket, which first came to light in France and of which the main part is now in the British Museum, came into the possession of the Museo Nationale of Florence. But what seems to me distinctly the most probable view is that it is a piece of an old Roman or Etruscan urn, and that this piece (more probably than the urn intact) was found and decorated with the inscription by one of the countless English pilgrims who visited Rome in the period, from the seventh century on, of close relations between Rome and Anglo-Saxon England.<sup>1</sup>

To describe one's personal adventures and false starts in the pursuit of the solution of a problem is usually neither illuminating nor in good taste. It may seem particularly superfluous in the case of a result so obvious as is the runic character of our inscription to anyone familiar with runic forms. But my experience may be worth the confession in connection with Professor Hempl's well-known views regarding the origin of the runes. My previous acquaintance with runic inscriptions, apart from transcriptions, had been too remote and casual to leave me with any vivid picture of the runic alphabet. Hence the identification, which a runic specialist would have made at a glance, was delayed until an

<sup>1</sup> "That unceasing stream of pilgrims—prelates and prince and humble sinner—which now from England and the farther isles as well as from all parts of Francia thronged the road to the threshhold of the apostles," *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, II, 583. The sojourn of English pilgrims in Rome was a commonplace, and the English "schools" or stations for their entertainment are frequently mentioned in Bede and the Saxon Chronicle.

accident drew my attention to the form of a certain rune and put me on the right track. Before this I had been canvassing the early Italic alphabets—and quite naturally. For not merely had the inscribed fragment come from Italy; the general style of the characters and also the majority of the particular forms were identical with those to be found in one or another of these alphabets. Yet some of the forms could not be paralleled, and many of those that could be were not found together in the same alphabet. It was necessary to conclude that our inscription was not in any known variety of the Italic alphabets.

But in the process of elimination I could not fail to be impressed by certain remarkable points of agreement with the "North Etruscan" alphabets and that of the so-called "Old Sabellian" inscriptions (mostly from southern Picenum). Consequently, after my belated recognition of the runes, I reread with especial interest Hempl's comments on the origin of the runes (*Sievers Festschrift*, pp. 12 ff., *Jour. Germ. Phil.*, II, 370 ff.). For it will be recalled that in criticizing the current theory of Latin origin he pointed out that Wimmer, in surveying the non-Latin Italic alphabets only to reject them as sources, had paid scant attention to the "Old Sabellian" and "North Etruscan," in which were some significant points of agreement. Hempl's own conclusion was that the runes were "based on a Western Greek alphabet differing but little from the Formello alphabet and that in the direction of certain other Western alphabets, for example the Venetic, the East Italic (or 'Sabellic'), and the Gallic." The fuller exposition of his views which was then promised has not yet appeared. Hempl's criticism has been recognized as, at the least, a most serious blow to the prestige of Wimmer's treatment, and there have been other scholars, before and since, who definitely rejected the whole theory of Latin origin. Yet this theory is still widely held (for example, the Swedish archaeologist Montelius in a lecture in Chicago some years ago stated it as not subject to doubt), perhaps, as Hempl remarked in 1898, "for the simple reason that no other has been so well presented or in any way established."

My accidentally renewed interest in the question has led me to the conviction, which I express here for whatever it may be worth,

and however superfluous it may seem to those already convinced, that Hempl is on the right track, even though there are wide gaps in the evidence which will have to be at least partially filled before his theory can win general acceptance. And these gaps cannot be filled from the inscriptional material at present available. Even so, Wimmer's theory ought to be definitely abandoned as contrary to all reason. It is utterly incredible that the Latin alphabet of the first century A.D. should, merely from its use on wood, as Wimmer assumes (*Runenschrift*, p. 97), or from any other accident, have reverted to archaic forms identical in so large measure with forms current in the non-Latin Italic alphabets. The mere external identity of at least fourteen of the twenty-four Germanic runes with forms in these Italic alphabets, the question of values being left out of account, can hardly be accidental.<sup>1</sup> This is not to imply that the relation of values must not also be measurably cleared up before any positive theory of origin can be regarded as established. But there is always the possibility of new inscriptional material from northern Italy and beyond, which will disclose a variety of alphabet with more agreement in values than any now quotable. Hempl has, I think, made the acceptance of his theory more difficult by assuming an unnecessarily early date for the establishment of the runes, namely about 600 B.C. Many of the Italic alphabets seem to have retained their archaic type down to the time when they were replaced by the Latin, and I see no reason why the borrowing might not be set as late as the first century B.C., or perhaps even the first century A.D.

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<sup>1</sup> One of the most striking cases of formal identity which I had noticed in my comparison, and one which Hempl emphasized and interpreted as regards value, is that between our no. 4, the *d*-rune, and the character which occurs, in the value of a sibilant, in "Old Sabellian," Venetic, in some varieties of "North Etruscan," and rarely in Etruscan (cf. Pauli, *Altital. Foresch.*, III, 154 ff.).

Another case of formal agreement, which I had noted particularly because of the peculiar form, is that between our no. 16 (the English *p*-rune) and a character that occurs several times in the inscription of Bellante (Zvetaieff, *Inscr. Ital. Med. Dial.*, no. 1). But so long as the former is confined to England and the value of the latter is unknown (usually thought to be a sibilant, though it has also been taken as *r* or *b*), it will be futile to assert a real connection.

A notable case of identity in both form and value, one which Wimmer was aware of but declared accidental (*Runenschrift*, p. 99, footnote), is that between the Germanic *a*-rune (= Eng. *a*-rune, our no. 5) and the *a*-character in several varieties of the "North Etruscan" alphabet (cf. table in Pauli, *Altital. Foresch.*, I, 57), for example in the bilingual of Todl and the "Lepontian" inscriptions from Ornavasso, west of Lago Maggiore.

## NOTES ON EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FICTIONAL TRANSLATIONS

A conspicuous feature of the development of English fiction before the nineteenth century is the importance of foreign models in their influence on native fiction through translation and imitation. This influence of translated fiction was curiously strengthened and directed by the methods employed by translators of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> A critic writing in 1790 laments that "amidst the numberless translations which every day appear, both of the works of the ancients and moderns, there should be so few that are possessed of real merit," and points out that the universal sense of the utility of translation has been but a means of throwing the practice of translation "into mean and mercenary hands."<sup>2</sup> Of obvious inferiority were the hack-writers and professional fictionists of the first half of the eighteenth century whose translated novels were garbled abridgments and revisions which often completely metamorphosed in English guise their Spanish and French originals. It was their habit to adapt to English taste alien products, to reflect British standards of manners and morals by means of interpolations and alterations, in some cases changing the scene from Paris to London, sometimes substituting for French names typically British cognomens, often in greater or less degree modifying speech and thought and even most critical and characteristic acts to suit the purposes of entertainment plus instruction to which British fiction was so generally dedicated.

<sup>1</sup> In regard to the generally free poetical translations of the classics made at this period, see *Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit.*, Vol. IX, chap. x. The training in translation provided by the school curricula is displayed in Hooke's *A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching School* (1660).

<sup>2</sup> Tytler, *An Essay on the Principles of Translation* (Everyman's Lib. ed., London and New York, n.d.), pp. 4-5. In this essay, originally a paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Lord Woodhouselee sums up the conflicting theories of translation and their practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He refers to the two standards of translation current during this period: "According to the former idea of translation, it is allowable to improve and to embellish; according to the latter, it is necessary to preserve even blemishes and defects" (*ibid.*, p. 8). Chapter iii he entitles, "Whether it is allowable for a translator to add to or retrench the ideas of the original. Examples of the use and abuse of this liberty."

Striking evidence of the complicated interrelations between English and French fiction in the eighteenth century, and perhaps an extreme example of the liberties allowed themselves by translators, both English and French, of the period, appears in an unnoted bibliographical tangle, centering around Mrs. Eliza Haywood's *The Fortunate Foundlings*, published in 1744.<sup>1</sup>

The initial incident of the plot of this novel involves the finding of twin babes (named in an accompanying letter Horatio and Louisa) by an English gentleman, Dorilaus, who adopts them, educates them, secures a commission for Horatio, then inadvertently falls in love with Louisa. She flees from his passion, works as a milliner's apprentice, then becomes the companion of a lady of quality, Melanthe. The rest of Mrs. Haywood's novel recounts Melanthe's story of her life, the later amorous experiences of Melanthe and Louisa while traveling on the continent, and the military adventures of Horatio; and ends by explaining the mystery of the foundlings, who prove to be the offspring of an illicit love of Dorilaus' youth.

In 1754 Crebillon fils published *Les Heureux Orphelins, histoire imitée de l'anglois*. In this work he uses, with alterations for purposes of erotic interest, Mrs. Haywood's plot up to the point of the telling of Melanthe's story, translating at some points word for word, and at others with freedom, changing the names of the characters to typical English names and titles. The rest of the story is totally different from the original. Melanthe (named "the Countess of Suffolk") gives a very different account of herself, and the last half of the story consists of the *histoire secrète du comte de Chester*, a narrative in epistolary form by a libertine, a Gallicized Lovelace, who was introduced early in the story in amorous pursuit of Lucie (Louisa), the "Mr. B—n" of Mrs. Haywood's narrative. He now glories in carefully executed triumphs over the Countess of Suffolk and two other ladies of the English court. No attempt is made to solve the initial mystery, or to resume the original threads of the narrative.

In 1758 appeared in English *The Happy Orphans, An Authentic History of Persons in High Life. With a variety of uncommon*

<sup>1</sup> For an analysis of this novel see Whicher, *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood* (New York, 1915), pp. 153-55.

events, and surprising turns of fortune. Translated and improved from the French original. The reviewers at once perceived a similarity between this and Mrs. Haywood's earlier novel. The *Monthly Review* for December, 1758, said:

We are very much mistaken if the above title-page is not all a lie. About fifteen years ago was published, in one volume, a novel entitled, *The Fortunate Foundlings*, written, as we believe, by the late famous Mrs. Haywood, of romancing memory. From that work the *Happy Orphans* appears to be taken, about verbatim; the difference chiefly consisting in an alteration of the names; but what the pirate, copiest, or the cobler, or by whatever title the honest editor chuses to be distinguished—what he means by calling his book a translation from the French, is best known to himself. *Transformed from the English* would, we apprehend, have been nearer the truth.<sup>1</sup>

The *Critical Review* investigated the case and disagreed with the *Monthly*'s decision, declaring that the tone and ideas in the two works are very different, since this one "tries to inform as well as entertain"; the reviewer concludes, therefore, that "it may be translated from the French with liberties."<sup>2</sup>

A comparison of this work with those of Mrs. Haywood and Crebillon shows that the anonymous author translated almost *verbatim* Crebillon's (not Mrs. Haywood's) story up to the point of the Countess of Suffolk's (Melanthe's) history, and then in turn disregarded his original, constructed a third biography for that lady of quality, and, carrying the story to as great length as Crebillon's, made it equally unlike both his and Mrs. Haywood's versions, and far more moralistic than either. The mystery is solved in the end by making the twins, Lucy and Edward (the names throughout are Crebillon's), the offspring of a union between a half-brother of the Earl of Rutland (Dorilaus) and an injured French lady, the union legalized by a forced marriage followed by the death of the bridegroom.

The anonymous author in this case makes a deliberate effort to appear the meticulous translator. Whereas Crebillon had cloaked all his material, plagiarized and original, under the subtitle *histoire imitée de l'anglois*, this writer appends several footnotes to

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Review*, XIX (1758), 580.

<sup>2</sup> *Critical Review*, VII (1759), 174-75.

the translated portion of his story discussing the aptness of word or phrase, or interpreting to an English audience the French author's material; e.g.:

In *French* the word is *violent*; but surely a *violent Situation* is a great inaccuracy of *Metaphor*: This is the only Instance we have yet observed in the Author [Vol. I, p. 52, note].

And:

The *French* denote by *the Exercises* all the ornamental Parts of Education, Dancing, Fencing, etc. [Vol. I, p. 11, note].

Then at the very end of the story, when the material is all his own, he asserts again his function of translator by the note:

Our *French* Novelist, we presume, had no Idea of the Injustice of this Remark; inferior Persons, the *Canaille*, are bad enough everywhere [Vol. II, p. 271, note].

Other examples of this mode of translation are not difficult to find, though some of the tangles they contrive work confusion for the student of English fiction. Similarly free translation was accorded Marivaux's novels. *Le Paysan Parvenu* was translated in 1735 under the title *Le Paysan Parvenu; or, The Fortunate Peasant. Being Memoirs of the Life of Mr. ——. Translated from the French of M. de Marivaux.*<sup>1</sup> In 1757 appeared an altered version entitled *The Fortunate Villager; or, Memoirs of Sir Andrew Thompson.*<sup>2</sup>

The *Monthly Review* describes this in deprecatory tone:

This is a new Translation, (or rather *transmogrification*), of Marivaux's *Paysan Parvenu*. The Editor has the honesty, in his Preface, to acknowledge from whence he drew his materials; but he would have shewn himself honester still, had he signified as much in his Title-page or Advertisements.

"I have ventured," says he, "to change the scene of action from Paris to London; and the names of the several personages who fill the drama, which, in the original, are truly French, into downright English." But our Metamorphoser seems to have overlooked the propriety of altering also the manners, character, and incidents; which still remain as truly

<sup>1</sup> Esdaile, *A List of English Tales and Prose Romances Printed before 1740* (London, 1912), p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Lond. Mag.*, L (1757), 208; *Lond. Chron.*, I (February 24–26, 1757), 199; *Monthly Review*, XVI (1757), 284. This title appears in the list of novels in a circulating library prefixed to Coleman's *Polly Honeycomb*, acted in 1760.

French as ever: so that *Monsieur* looks as like an Englishman, as Buck in the farce . . . resembles a French Beau. Upon the whole we cannot help preferring the old translation of this book, entitled *The Fortunate Peasant*, printed for Brindley and Corbet in the year 1735.

Marivaux's *Vie de Marianne* was even more variously treated. Three translations of this novel appeared in rapid succession: A literal translation (1736-42), known only from the notices in the *Gentleman's Magazine*,<sup>1</sup> is entitled *The Life of Marianne; or, the Adventures of the Countess of ——. By M. de Marivaux. Translated from the French Original.* A much altered version, appearing, I believe, soon after this, though we know it only in the later reprint in the *Novelist's Magazine*, is entitled *The Virtuous Orphan; or, the Life of Marianne*; this contains many interpolations and a conclusion quite foreign in tone to the French original. In 1746 appears what seems to be an abridgment of this version with the French names changed to English, entitled *The Life and Adventures of Indiana, the Virtuous Orphan*.<sup>2</sup>

Clara Reeve was familiar with the translations of Marivaux; in 1785 in her *Progress of Romance* she deals caustically with such "transmogrifications." She speaks of the "poor literal translation" of *Marianne* published in 1742, and then continues:

Soon after another attempt was made by a still worse hand, this is called *Indiana or the virtuous Orphan*, in this piece of patchwork, many of the fine reflexions, the most valuable part of the work are omitted, the Story left, unfinished by the death of M. Marivaux, is finished by the same bungler, and in the most absurd manner. It puts me in mind of what was said to a certain translator of *Virgil*.

Read the commandments friend,—translate no further,  
For it is written, thou shalt do no murther.<sup>3</sup>

Of Marivaux's other novel she speaks also:

*Sophronia*. Is the *Paysan Parvenue* (*sic*) translated into English? *Eupharasia*. It is but not much better than *Marianne*, nor is it so well known, it is frequent-confounded with the *Paysanne Parvenue* of the Chevalier Mouhy, which without half its merit is much more popular.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Esdaile, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxii, 269.

<sup>2</sup> The relations between these translations I have discussed in an article, "Translations of the *Vie de Marianne* and Their Relation to Contemporary English Fiction," *Med. Phil.*, XV (1917), 491-512.

<sup>3</sup> *Progress of Romance* (Colchester, 1785), pp. 129-30.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130. Perhaps some student with access to the volumes can tell whether variations similar to those found in the successive translations of Marivaux's novels

The theories justifying such liberties as these translators allowed themselves are explained in the translator's prefaces to other works of the time. John Lockman, poet and translator, gives technical grounds for his practice in the preface to his translation of another work of Marivaux's, *Pharsamond; or, the New Knight-Errant . . . . By Monsieur de Marivaux, Member of the French Academy in Paris: Author of The Life of Marianne, etc. Translated by Mr. Lockman* (1750). He says:

I not only endeavour'd to avoid *Gallicisms*; but even gave, whenever I thought this could be done with Propriety, an English termination to the *Names of Persons*. This reconciles, still more, an English Reader's Mind to such a Work; in like manner as a Foreigner's conforming Himself to the Dress of a Country, is more pleasing to the Eyes of it's Natives.

I speak with greater Confidence on these Heads, as the publick have been particularly indulgent to one of my English Versions, drawn up according to these Rules; I mean the very ingenious *M. de Voltaire's Letters Concerning the English Nation*.<sup>1</sup>

Much liberty is justified on moral grounds. The triumph of British decorum appears in the preface to another translation: *The Beau-Philosopher; or, the History of the Chevalier de Mainvillers. Translated from the French Original* (1751):

The Translator flatters himself with the Hope, that those who have a Sense of Virtue, will pardon his having, in the Course of this Work, sometimes check'd the Sallies of his Author's Wit, when it began to grow profane, and the Lusciousness of an Expression, when tending to corrupt or debilitate the Mind of the young Reader: That they will pardon him, if in any Instance where Profaneness and Lewdness have been united, he has broke the Conjunction; and by presuming to alter a Word or two, has given a different Turn to a Thought, or cloathed an Expression with greater Decency.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly in 1741 a translation of *The Decameron* was commended to "the Publick" with the assurance of the publisher (Dodsley) "that such care has been taken in this Translation to

appear in the two translations of the Chevalier de Mouhy's *La Paysanne Parvenue*: the anonymous translation entitled *The Fortunate Countrymaid* (1740-41), reprinted in the *Novelist's Magazine*; and Mrs. Haywood's version, *The Virtuous Villager* (1742). (Vide Whicher, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-52.)

<sup>1</sup> From a copy in the University of Chicago Library; Preface [p. ii].

<sup>2</sup> From a copy in the University of Chicago Library; Preface, pp. ix-x.

render the Expression delicate and decent, that even the Ladies need not be afraid of reading or having these ingenious Novels."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps, however, a consideration more potent than these accounts for the freedom of the average hack translator. Under the pseudonym *Felicité de Biron* one of these writers defends the translators of *Grub Street* in the "Preface by the Translator" to *The Adventures and Amours of the Marquis de Noailles and Mademoiselle Tencin. Translated from a French Manuscript* (1756):

Besides, as Delays and Revisals are terrible Things to Translators, who seldom happen to be over-loaded with Cash, the pretty Manner of delivering a few Sheets of Copy into the Printer's Hand on a *Saturday Night*, for which *he's down with the Dust*, is a most convenient Way of Dealing, and makes us Drudges go thro' our Work with cheerful Hearts.<sup>2</sup>

Such an attitude toward literary property as these examples attest, such license on the part of translators both English and French, throws light upon methods of literary craftsmanship which influenced the growing fictional technique, and upon cosmopolitan relationships affecting the novel of the time.<sup>3</sup>

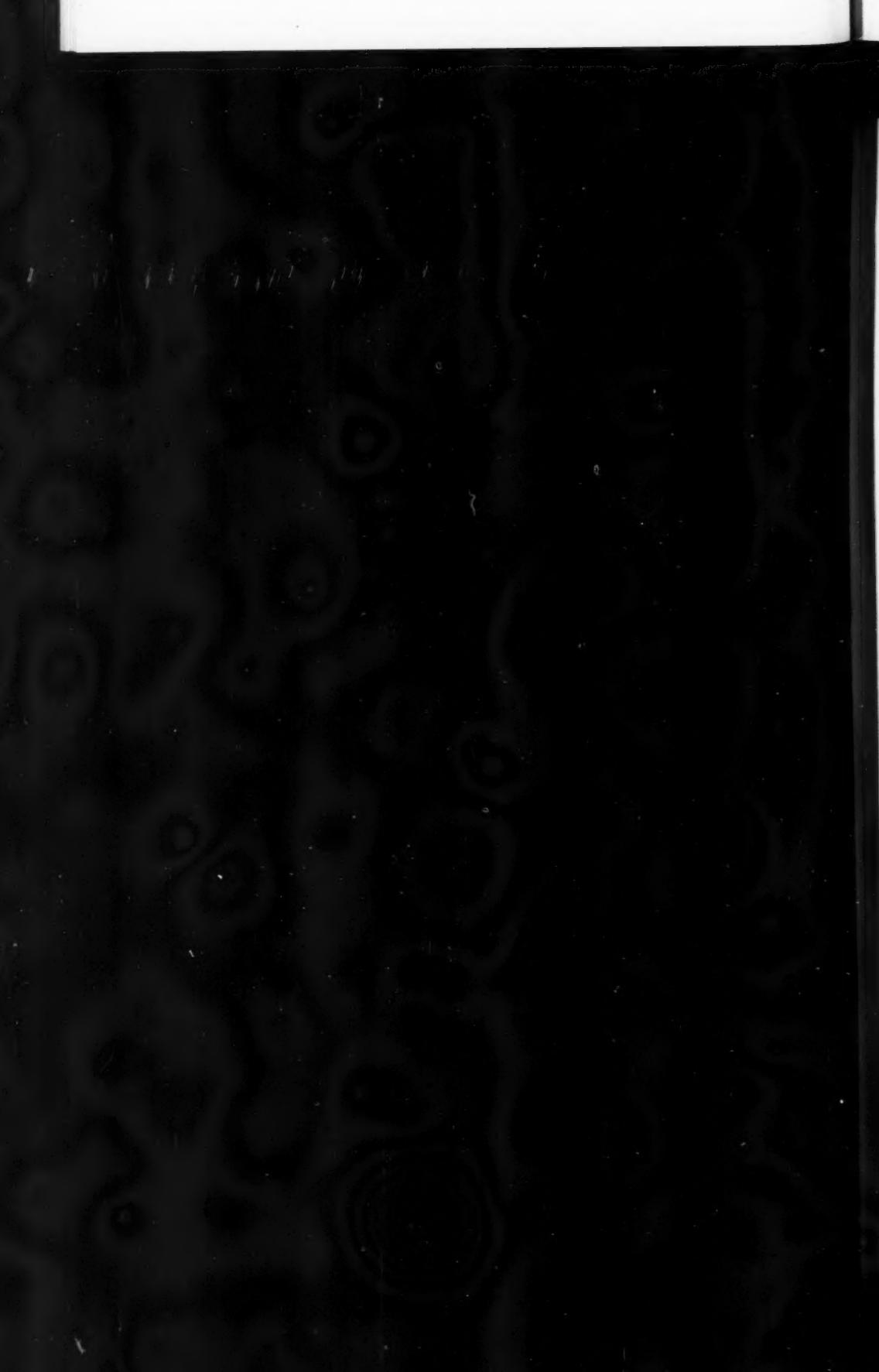
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<sup>1</sup> Straus, *Robert Dodsley, Poet, Publisher and Playwright* (London and New York, 1910), p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> From the copy in the University of Chicago Library; Preface, p. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Since this paper was written there appeared in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XXXIII (December, 1918), 469-71, an article by Mr. W. Kurrelmeyer, "A German Version of *Joseph Andrews*," which discusses a garbled translation of *Fielding's* novel from a French version into German, entitled, *Fieldings Komischer Roman*, Berlin, 1765. "The text," Mr. Kurrelmeyer says, "is that of the *Adventures of Joseph Andrews* apart from the fact that most of the characters have also been disguised under new names. Occasionally also literary disquisitions, allusions to unfamiliar English characters, letters, and the like, have been omitted or shortened, but without affecting the continuity of the story proper." That a French version is the source is indicated by slight emendations of names "generally indicative of French influence" and "a number of notes and additions to the text which were evidently intended for a French public."



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*Joseph Ritson, A Critical Biography.* By HENRY ALFRED BURD.  
University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature,  
Vol. II, No. 3, August, 1916. Pp. 224.

*Joseph Ritson, A Critical Biography*, is an important contribution to the literature dealing with the scholarly background of English Romanticism during the late eighteenth century. Without ignoring or condoning Ritson's many shortcomings, Dr. Burd shows that the literary and antiquarian work of the little Stockton conveyancer possesses a significance far greater than has generally been recognized. Because of unreasoning prejudice and violent language, Ritson was disregarded by most of his contemporaries and by posterity has been well-nigh forgot; but, thanks to Dr. Burd, he is at last revealed as a scholar and a critic who, by his passion for accuracy and his tremendous grasp of fact, rebuked an age of intellectual dishonesty, and who, by an acumen at times little short of inspiration, enunciated theories to which the scholarly world has finally returned after long and bitter controversies.

Besides helping to save from oblivion one of the greatest pioneers of modern scholarship, Dr. Burd draws attention (p. 170, note) to the importance of investigating "the part played by ethnological and linguistic theories in the literary movements of the late eighteenth century." His conviction that the vogue of Ossian was partly due to feelings of racial kinship would doubtless have been strengthened by a perusal of Rudolph Tombo's *Ossian in Germany* (New York, 1901; especially pp. 67, 71) and P. Van Tieghem's *Ossian en France* (Paris, I [1917], pp. 192 ff.), which latter, however, did not appear till after the publication of Dr. Burd's dissertation.

The following comments are inspired less by a hypercritical mania of the Ritsonian type than by a desire to assist further in the work of salvaging Ritson's scholarly reputation.

In discussing the question of Ritson's attitude toward Greek (p. 14), Dr. Burd overlooks a passage in the *Annals of the Caledonians*, etc. (I [1828], 54, note), which shows that, however contemptuous Ritson may have been toward that language during his early years, he finally came to respect it. Moreover, Ritson's words, if written with his customary candor, imply that his quotation from Dion Cassius in Latin translation was due more to the common ignorance of Greek among his readers than to his own inability to construe a Greek text, at least with the help of a translation. His

words are: "The text of Dio is well known to be in Greek, but that language being far less cultivated than the Roman (a preference, at the same time, much to be lamented!), it appeared most proper to adopt the Latin version, which accompanies the original; being not only the work of a good scholar, but, likewise, faithful and literal, so far at least as the idioms of the two languages will allow." A little Welsh and Irish might perhaps be added to the linguistic stock in trade which Dr. Burd attributes to Ritson (pp. 14 f.).

In connection with the discussion of Ritson as a critic of Shakespeare, attention may be called to the notes on Macbeth and related personages who figure in Scottish legendary history (*Annals of the Caledonians*, II, 106, note; 110, note; 114, notes; 240, 333, note; 334, note). Ritson's observations (*op. cit.*, II, 120), designed to prove that the historical Macbeth "had no issue," are not mentioned in the *New Variorum Shakespeare* among the critical comments on Macduff's words in the play (IV, iii, 216), although others no more pertinent are quoted. The student of popular poetry would have welcomed a more nearly complete account of the scanty though precious evidence of Ritson's connection with Scott in the matter of ballad collecting and editing. (See, for example, Andrew Lang, *Sir Walter Scott and the Border Minstrels*, 1910, pp. 24 f.) Dr. Burd asserts (p. 137) that Wissmann finally overthrew Ritson's contention that *King Horn* is derived from a French original, but, although Brandl (*Paul's Grundriss*, II, 1, p. 624) and Gröber (*Grundriss*, p. 573) incline to regard the source as English, Schofield (*Eng. Lit. from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer* [1906], p. 261) derives the *Gest* from a lost French poem (cf. Northup, *Jour. of Eng. and Germ. Philol.*, IV [1902], 539), and Nelles (*Jour. of Am. Folk-Lore*, XXII [1909], 53) asserts that "recent students of the story are tolerably agreed . . . that a French version of some sort must stand back of these two romances" (*Horn et Rimenild* and *King Horn*). For confirmation of Ritson's opinion that *Richard Cœur de Lion* is of genuine English growth Dr. Burd cites (p. 155, n. 21) the editors of *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, but Schofield (*op. cit.*, p. 314) and Wells (*Bibliog. of the Writings in Middle English* [1916], p. 152) accept as authentic the references in the text of the romance to a French source. Judged by the amount of space devoted to others of Ritson's works, *King Arthur* appears to deserve more attention than Dr. Burd has seen fit to bestow upon it. As may be seen from a reading of Fletcher's *Arthurian Material in the Chronicles* ([Harvard] *Studies and Notes*, X [1906]) and Windisch's "Das keltische Britannien bis zu Kaiser Arthur" (*Abhandl. der königl. sächs. Gesell. der Wissn.*, Phil.-Hist. Kl., XXIV [1912]) in connection with *King Arthur*, the problems discussed by Ritson are frequently those still regarded as important, and the conclusions reached are in an astonishingly large number of cases essentially those of the best recent authorities. For example, Ritson treats of such matters as the date of Geoffrey's *Historia*, the origin of the Round Table, the return

of Arthur, Glastonbury and the grave of Arthur, and Arthur in the lives of Welsh saints; but Ritson's book is now being investigated by a former student of the University of Chicago, and I must not anticipate her results.

Lowth's *De sacra poesi Hebrorum* and Brown's *Rise . . . of Poetry and Music*, because of their importance as expressions of eighteenth-century opinion regarding the origin and progress of primitive literature, should be added to the sources of Ritson's "Historical Essay . . . on National Song" alluded to by Dr. Burd (p. 150). The "Essay" itself contains much significant material for which Dr. Burd apparently found no space. Ritson's assertion that "we are . . . to look for the simplicity of the remotest periods among the savage tribes of America" is interesting in connection with the growing tendency during the eighteenth century to attribute to the aborigines of the New World modes of thought and of poetic expression which, according to contemporary scholars, were characteristic of the Northern sealds, the ancient Celtic bards, and the minstrels of the Middle Ages. In support of his opinion Ritson quotes four stanzas from "The Death-Song of a Cherokee Indian," "which," he says, "are handed about in manuscript, and have not, it is believed, already appeared in print" (*English Songs*, I [1813], ii, note). According to Park, the editor of Ritson's work, the poem is "the acknowledged production of the very accomplished Mrs. John Hunter," but J. L. Onderdonk (*Hist. of American Verse*, Chicago, 1901, pp. 80 f.) claims that Mrs. Hunter merely appropriated with slight alterations the work of the American poet Philip Freneau. Onderdonk, who notes the appearance of Freneau's version in the *American Museum* for January, 1787, knows nothing of Ritson's quotation from Mrs. Hunter's form four years previously.<sup>1</sup> Freneau has been regarded as one of the earliest sympathetic interpreters of Indian character, and the "Death-Song" appears to have been popular on both sides of the Atlantic. It is strikingly similar to the closing lines of Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming," and was quoted in Mrs. Hunter's form by Henry Clay in his speech on the Seminole War delivered in January, 1819. Ritson also translates into English prose Montaigne's "original Caribbean song." Montaigne's French had already served as the source of the elder Thomas Warton's "American Love-Ode" (*Poems* [1748], p. 139), which in turn may have suggested Gray's inclusion of American songs among "the illustrations of poetic Genius" to be found in the literatures of "the remotest and most uncivilized nations" (note to "The Progress of Poesie"). See Farley, *Scand. Influences in the Eng. Rom. Movement* [1903], p. 66, n. 2, where Ritson's translation is referred to. As an example of nature poetry among

<sup>1</sup> According to Onderdonk, the "Death-Song" appeared in the *American Museum* "with no name attached." In the third edition it is, however, attributed to "P. Freneau" (*The American Museum* for January, 1787, Vol. I, No. 1 [Philadelphia, 1790], p. 77), and is printed as his in *The Poems of Philip Freneau*, ed. F. L. Pattee, 11 (1903), 313.

the ancient Scandinavians Ritson refers especially to the "Descent of Odin" and the "Death Song of Regner Lodbrog," both of which had already received distinguished attention at the hands of English critics and versifiers. The importance of Ritson's "Historical Essay" for eighteenth-century interest in Scandinavian is discussed by Farley, whose book should be consulted for other remarks on Ritson and his work (see especially pp. 101 ff.).

In the field of Welsh literature Ritson is acquainted with Evans' *Specimens*, and, although he accepts the contemporary exaggerated estimate of the antiquity of the poems attributed to Taliesin and Llywarch Hen, his account of the bards is, generally speaking, ahead of his time. He insists on applying the methods of scholarship to Sir J. Wynne's story that Edward I exterminated the Welsh bards, although the tradition, because of its romantic suggestions, had met with wide popularity through Carte's *History of England* and Gray's "Bard," and he succeeds in completely disproving its authenticity. Yet Ritson's discussion was entirely unknown to Stephens, who nearly three-quarters of a century later presented the historical evidence in his *Literature of the Kymry* (first edition, 1849, p. 104), and to Professor Phelps, who refers only to Stephens as having "exploded the tradition" (*Selections from Gray*, p. 157). As could easily be shown from an examination of other passages in the "Essay," Ritson combined in an astonishing fashion the most advanced scholarly opinions with the most romantic contemporary theories regarding the mind of primitive man, the constitution of society in "a state of nature and simplicity," and the origins of language and of poetry. Moreover, his historical survey of English song-writers shows a genuine appreciation of good poetry which is too frequently overlooked even by those who recognize his services to scholarship.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Burd's conjecture that Ritson would have espoused the theory of individual authorship for the popular ballads would doubtless have gained support from a consideration of the eighteenth-century theories regarding nature poetry which obviously inspired certain statements in Ritson's prefaces. In a passage quoted by Dr. Burd (p. 157) he asserts that genuine ballads must be sought among people who, "destitute of the advantages of science and education, and perhaps incapable of committing the pure inspiration of nature to writing," "actually felt the sensations they describe," and he implies that "the vulgar songs composed and sung during the civil wars of York and Lancaster" (the loss of which he deplores) were composed during a period "in which almost every moment afforded

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Burd appears to have missed a series of keen critical comments recorded by Ritson in a copy of John Scott's *Critical Essays* which was purchased by Charles Lamb at the sale of Ritson's books. Ritson's notes and the remarks of Scott, to which they apply, were transcribed by Lamb for the *London Magazine*, April, 1823, and are to be found among Lamb's *Essays*. (See Lamb's *Complete Works*, ed. Shepherd [London, 1875], pp. 437 ff.)

some great, noble, interesting or pathetic subject, for the imagination of the poet" (*Eng. Songs*, I, lxv). Whatever may have been Ritson's opinion regarding the question of ballad authorship, which has assumed such importance since his day, he would undoubtedly have agreed with Professor Kittredge that "the traditional ballad appears to be inimitable by any person of literary cultivation" (Child's *Ballads*, one vol. ed., p. xxix), and, judged by his observations on Pinkerton's forgeries (*Gent. Mag.*, Vol. LIV, Part II [1784], No. 5, pp. 812 ff.), he would hardly have been deceived even by Andrew Lang's clever imitations of popular ballads written in answer to Professor Kittredge's challenge. Dr. Burd observes (p. 158, n. 37) that Ritson was always outspoken against the Ossianic imposture, but he fails to record Ritson's statements that Macpherson's epics "are undoubtedly very ingenious, artful, and, it may be, elegant compositions" (*Eng. Songs*, I, xlvi), and that the author "has made great use of some unquestionably ancient Irish ballads" (*Robin Hood*, 2d ed., I [1832], xcvi, note)—both of which judgments are not far behind the best that modern criticism can accomplish (cf. *Mod. Phil.*, XVI [1918], 446 f.). The significance of Ritson's conclusion is enhanced by the discovery that he was acquainted with genuine Ossianic tradition (cf. *Annals of the Caledonians*, etc., I [1828], 88, note).

In several other matters connected with Celtic Ritson's opinions deserve consideration both because they show a startlingly modern attitude toward early theories and because they have been so largely ignored by recent authorities. When, for example, Ritson denominates "hasty and unfounded" the assertion of Edward Lhuyd, that "the original inhabitants of Britain were . . . Guydhels, or Guydhelians" (*Annals of the Caledonians*, etc., I, 13), he anticipates the view of two distinguished modern Celts—Kuno Meyer (*Trans. Hon. Soc. of Cymrodonion* [1895–96], p. 69) and Alexander Macbain (*Skene's Highlanders of Scotland* [Stirling, 1902], p. 383), whose theories represent a reaction against the more popular hypotheses of Rhŷs and D'Arbois, reflected in Deniker's *Races of Man*, to which Dr. Burd refers for "a statement of modern views concerning the peoples of Europe, especially the Celts" (p. 169, n. 75). Ritson's repudiation of the equation between *Scotti* and *Scythici* (*Annals of the Caledonians*, etc., II, 5, note) is significant in an age when the Scots were frequently asserted to have come from Scythia. His discussion of the Cassiterides (*Memoirs of the Celts or Gauls* [1827], pp. 290 ff.) should be compared with Holmes's summary of the evidence (*Ancient Britain and the Invasions of Julius Caesar* [Oxford, 1907], pp. 483 ff.), and his note on *Hibernia* and its analogues (*Annals of the Caledonians*, etc., II, 3, note) should be read in conjunction with Rhŷs's treatment of the word (*Proc. Brit. Acad.* I [reprint], 11 ff.). It is highly characteristic of the history of Ritson's reputation that one of the most recent historians of early Wales,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Eduardian Conquest* (Longmans, 1911), I, 191 f.

in an elaborate and heavily documented note tracing the various explanations of the name *Cymry*, says nothing of Ritson's highly respectable discussion of the word (*Annals of the Caledonians*, etc., I, 16, note) nor of Ritson's indignant protest against Pinkerton's attempt to connect the Cymry with the Cimbri, although he mentions the fanciful etymologies of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Theophilus Evans and even takes account of the vaporizing of George Borrow. Holmes (*Ancient Britain*, p. 418, note) takes note of Borlase's advocacy of the theory that the Caledonians were Germans, but says nothing of Ritson's contrary opinion, although it is that of the most modern authorities. Dr. Burd implies (pp. 170 f.) that recent opinion substantiates Ritson's thesis that the Picts were Celts, but the question is still *sub iudice*. Except the late D'Arbois de Jubainville, probably few recent Celts of high standing would admit that the evidence justifies even so much as the assertion that the Picts were Aryans (cf. Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 409 ff.). One of Ritson's chief services in this connection is his contention, in opposition to Pinkerton, that the Picts were not Germanic. It is to be noted, however, that the tradition of Pinkerton is still influential in that monument of misguided industry, David MacRitchie's *Testimony of Tradition* (London, 1890). Had MacRitchie utilized even such data as are accessible in the works of Ritson, he would have avoided much fantastic theorizing on the origin of British folk traditions. Attention should certainly be drawn to Ritson's valuable bibliography (in part critical) of books on Celtic languages and antiquities contained in *The Memoirs of the Celts or Gauls* (pp. 318 ff.) and to the justness of his estimate of such works as those of Pelloutier, Mallet, and Stukeley. A full discussion of Ritson's investigations in Celtic antiquities and of his vision, even through a glass darkly, of the facts of ancient British history would require far more space than can be devoted to the matter here. In any case, an adequate notion of the problems attacked by Ritson can hardly be derived from the brief summary of modern opinion contained in Deniker's little handbook, to which Dr. Burd refers.

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*A Register of Middle English Religious & Didactic Verse. Part I. List of Manuscripts.* By CARLETON BROWN. Oxford: Printed for the Bibliographical Society, at the University Press, 1916. Pp. xv+528.

In a Foreword the compiler explains the purpose and scope of his work, which unlike other Middle English bibliographies is based on the manuscripts. The first volume, arranged according to libraries, takes up the manuscripts which contain Middle English religious and didactic verse, and gives a list of all items of that character found in each. This volume is to be followed by a second, which will contain "an alphabetical index of

first lines, with citation under each entry of all manuscripts containing the piece in question and with references to printed texts in the case of those which have already been published." The index will make the *Register* much more convenient for reference than it now is, for at a glance one will be able to find a record of all the manuscripts in which a particular poem is to be found. But even in its present incomplete form the bibliography is not difficult to use. Most scholars who really desire to learn in what manuscripts a poem appears will not object to devoting a relatively small number of hours to running through the volume.

Of the value of such a work to the student of Middle English literature there can be no doubt. As Professor Brown says, "So long as it is necessary in embarking on any particular inquiry in this field to make a general search through the manuscript collections, literary research in Middle English must continue to be laborious and uncertain, for no secure foundation can be laid except upon the basis of complete knowledge of the original sources." His volume relieves the scholar of need for such a search in at least one part of that field.

It is to be noted, moreover, that the *Register* gives references to hitherto little known or even entirely unknown versions of poems. (Professor Wells's *Manual of the Writings in Middle English* affords the most convenient means of determining what manuscripts of a given poem have been generally known.) Thus we find three new copies of the *Trental of Gregory* (see pp. 132, 456, 494), one of *The Stacions of Rome* (p. 286), and one of the *Debate between the Body and the Soul* (p. 419). There are doubtless many similar cases.

From page 457 to page 521 Professor Brown lists the manuscripts of religious poems in private collections. This is the most difficult part of the field to cover, because with the dispersal of private collections such manuscripts pass into other hands. Probably every scholar of mediaeval literature has had the unpleasant experience of finding a reference in some catalogue to a manuscript in private ownership and not being able to discover what has become of it. Professor Brown gives much valuable information about the present ownership of such manuscripts, but even he is compelled to state at times, "Present owner unknown." At least one manuscript seems not to be entered at all, that described as "a fine early copy (on a roll of parchment) of *The Stacions of Rome*," owned by Reginald Cholmondeley, Esq., of Conduver Hall, Shropshire (*Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, V, 333-34). Absolute completeness, however, cannot be expected in a work of this kind, and discovery even of several omissions would not absolve the student of mediaeval English literature from the gratitude which he ought to feel to Professor Brown for gathering and publishing the materials necessary to a knowledge of Middle English religious poetry.

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*The Vocabulary of Anglo-Irish.* By JAMES M. CLARK. St. Gall: Zollikoffer & Cie, 1917. Pp. 48.

Professor Clark's brochure on the vocabulary of Anglo-Irish is based partly on Patrick W. Joyce's *English as We Speak It in Ireland* and on articles by Marcus Hartog and Mary Hayden (*Fort. Rev.*, N.S., LXXXV [1909]) and by A. G. Van Hamel (*Eng. Stud.*, XLV [1912]). "The way in which Erse on one hand and Elizabethan English on the other, have left their traces on the Anglo-Irish vocabulary forms the main subject of this treatise" (p. 14). The author apparently makes no attempt at completeness, but his principle of choice is not always clear, and some at least of the material omitted might well have found a place even in a brief survey of the field. An adequate notion of the number of English novels and tales in which Irish-English has been used during the last century and a half can hardly be derived from Professor Clark's list (pp. 6-10). Among other valuable sources of information regarding the history of English in Ireland are certain English poems written in Ireland during the early fourteenth century (ed. Heuser, *Angl. Forschr.*, XIV [1904]) and the memoir by Colonel Vallancey (*Trans. R.I.A.*, 1788: "Antiquities," pp. 19 ff.). See further Camden, *Britannia* (ed. Gough, 1806, Vol. IV, pp. 323, 325) and Croker, *Pop. Songs of Ir.* (London, 1839), pp. 219, 277 ff. Among the Gaelic words and phrases found in Anglo-Irish one misses *deoch an dorais*, *beannacht leat*, *dáidín*, *sidheog*, *seanchuidhe*, and *duileasc*. English readers would be glad to learn that such characteristic phrases as (1) 'in life' (meaning 'at all'), (2) 'the like(s) of him,' (3) 'from this out,' (4) 'I let on,' and (5) 'in it' (as in, "By the blessed night that's in it") are translations of the Gaelic (1) *ar bith*, (2) *a leithéid*, (3) *as so amach*, (4) *leigim orm*, and (5) *ann*. The use of co-ordinate participial phrases instead of the subordinate construction of standard English is heard frequently among English speakers with no Gaelic affinities and is found in English long before Wolfe's "And we far away on the billow," which appears to be the only illustration in English poetry known to Professor Clark. It turns up in the refrain of the English ballad "The Fair Flower of Northumberland" (Child, No. 9), the oldest preserved version of which was written as early as 1597. The present tense of 'have' plus the participle, as in "I have my breakfast eaten," occurs in Old English (cf. Jespersen, *Growth and Struct. of the Eng. Lang.*, p. 204). The statement that in Anglo-Irish "relative clauses are avoided by the omission of the relative pronoun" (p. 24) may meet with objection from students of historical syntax (cf. Kellner, *Hist. Outlines of Eng. Syn.*, secs. 109 ff.). In calling attention to the occurrence in America of peculiarities found in Anglo-Irish the author fails to note that the following given in his list are used in this country: 'shy' (to throw), 'lick' (to beat), 'power' or 'sight' (large amount or number), 'joke' and 'fun' (as verbs), 'raggedy' (for ragged), 'crock' (earthenware jar), 'curdog,' and 'skillet.'

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